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# : CAIRNS :

## Atherton Tableland

Sugar Districts, Pastoral Plains, and Great Mineral Fields.

### Foreword.

THE beauty and richness of the Northern Queensland area known roughly as "the Cairns District" have been famous for a number of years, but invariably the publicity literature of any progressive place needs to be replaced periodically by literature that is entirely new, otherwise it is neither accurate, up to date, nor particularly useful. The necessity to provide for public distribution a newly standardised book on the district named has been recognised departmentally, with the result that an experienced writer and observer was despatched to the North to obtain first-hand information.

The visit was made during the months of January and February—the rainy season to which Southern lore in relation to North Queensland usually attributes excessive humidity and heat. Actually, except that the rains were more continuous, the North Queensland summer climate was found to be not altogether different to that of the warm areas of the temperate zone, and on the elevated plateaux and hills of the interior it was necessary, even in that summery period, to sleep under a blanket and to wear a wrap on all evening excursions. It was found, too, that the superb beauty and super-richness of a considerable portion of the area are such that they defy all the arts of exaggeration.



In such a connection highest praise can never be anything more than simple truth. In Australia, certainly, no more highly favoured region has been turned out of Nature's workshop to acquire new utility under the touch of Nature's trusty servants, Science and Industry. Its uniqueness, too, demands that those who would know Australia thoroughly must intimately confess the magic of its scenery, and intimately recall its distinctive productiveness and possibilities.

The journey from the Southern States is no elaborate business. All the important booking arrangements for land and sea travel can be made in the metropolitan cities, and when that has been accomplished the way is clear. The return journey will be made in association with a wealth of memories of beauty, metalliferousness, and fertility.

### **By the Way.**

Intelligent travellers who desire beauty and comfort all the way make their entry into Queensland at Wallangarra, the border town on the main railway route from Sydney to Brisbane. When the proposed coastal railway has been completed many tourists and settlers may decide to arrive at Cairns by traversing entirely the varied overland way. At present the most convenient ports for embarkation are at Gladstone and Port Alma. The former port is on the North Coast Railway, near the point where it enters the tropic zone, and the latter is further on and beyond the important provincial city which bears the name of Rockhampton.

It is not until the tropics are reached that the sea route takes on remarkable beauty.





VIEW AT CAIRNS.



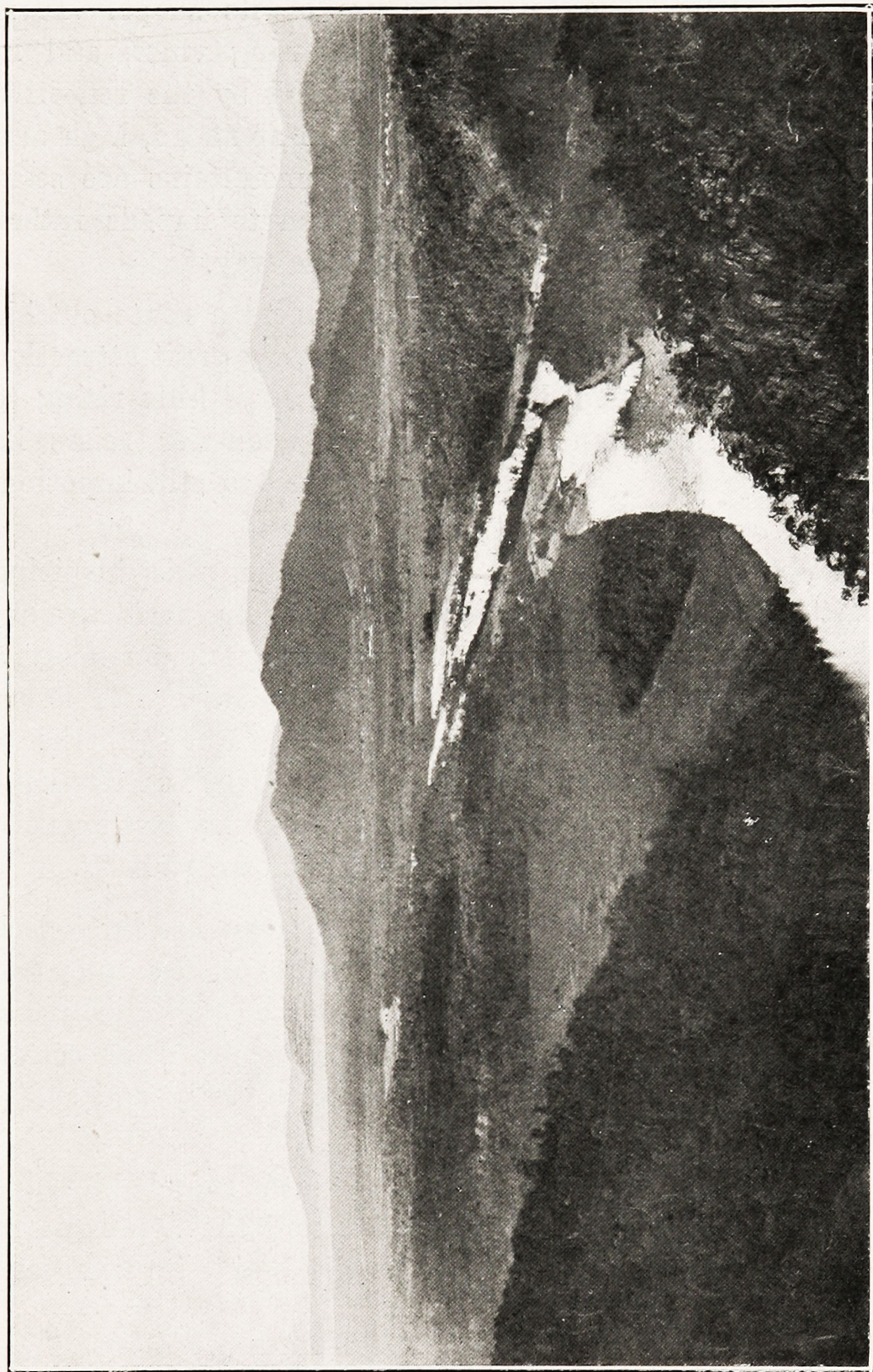
It grows thrillingly beautiful when Whitsunday Passage is entered after the port of Mackay has been left behind. There the ships pass through a deep, narrow channel, 60 miles in length, and both beautified and protected by mountainous islands and mainland, in each case vividly green and, for the greater part, heavily timbered. The heights are clothed with pines at their summits. They slope more or less precipitously to charming inlets and white sandy beaches. As well as the larger islands, which are leased as cattle or sheep runs, there are islands small in extent but perfect in scenic completeness.

Here, indeed, is beauty of the rarest type. Travellers who have seen most of the famously lovely places known to terrestrial wanderings frequently have declared that for intrinsic beauty island-bordered and islet-studded Whitsunday Passage excels any marine pass in the world. Ships' passengers who have the good fortune to enter it in the early hours of a brightly sunlit day see it at its very best. Then its freshness of atmosphere and clearness of surface add intensely to the general charm. Nature-lovers take up positions which enable them to embrace a view of both sides, and jealously assure that they shall not miss one feature of Nature's lovely moving-picture show.

Shortly after resuming the open waterway the very pretty harbour of Bowen is reached. The town slopes prettily to the water's edge, and travellers unaccustomed to tropic scenes find themselves awakened to new interest by the appearance of a long double avenue of cocoanut trees on the shore.

Another and almost equally beautiful passage through which the way may lead is Hinchinbrook Channel, which lies between Townsville and Cairns. At its entrance is





BARRON VALLEY, CAIRNS RAILWAY.



Haycock Island—so called because of its shape. It is clothed in beautiful timbers and trailing vines, and in bright sunlight its beauty is duplicated by the reflective character of the surrounding water. Far ahead, high and beautifully wavy coastal and island mountains are seen, and at that distance they falsely seem to impede rather than, as really is the case, to guard the way.

The larger steamships usually choose a route outside the channel, and passengers then find very great attraction in viewing a scalloped shore girt by high hills rising to proudly mountainous heights. Bellenden-Ker raises its cloud-capped majestic mass above other, but still imposing, peaks.

Wildly wavy and profoundly blue, this inspiring coastal range rises direct from the sea. Here and there are white beaches and shady inlets, and high up on many a height is seen the silvery gleam of waterfalls. For hours the ship glides by incomparable scenes on what practically is virgin coast, but as the harbour of Cairns is neared the shore scene is more humanised, and there may be discerned on a mountain side the red-soil cuttings of a railway.

In the harbour, five miles from the town, is a tidal clock beacon which tells on its face the state of the tide, and which invariably awakens the curiosity of the uninitiated. There are other harbour lights to ensure a right course for navigation, but port at any time is easily and safely made.

Except on the north the harbour is surrounded by high ranges which protect it from gales, and the depths of its waters enable large ships to lie snugly beside its wharves.

### **Cairns.**

Cairns, so named after one of Queensland's early



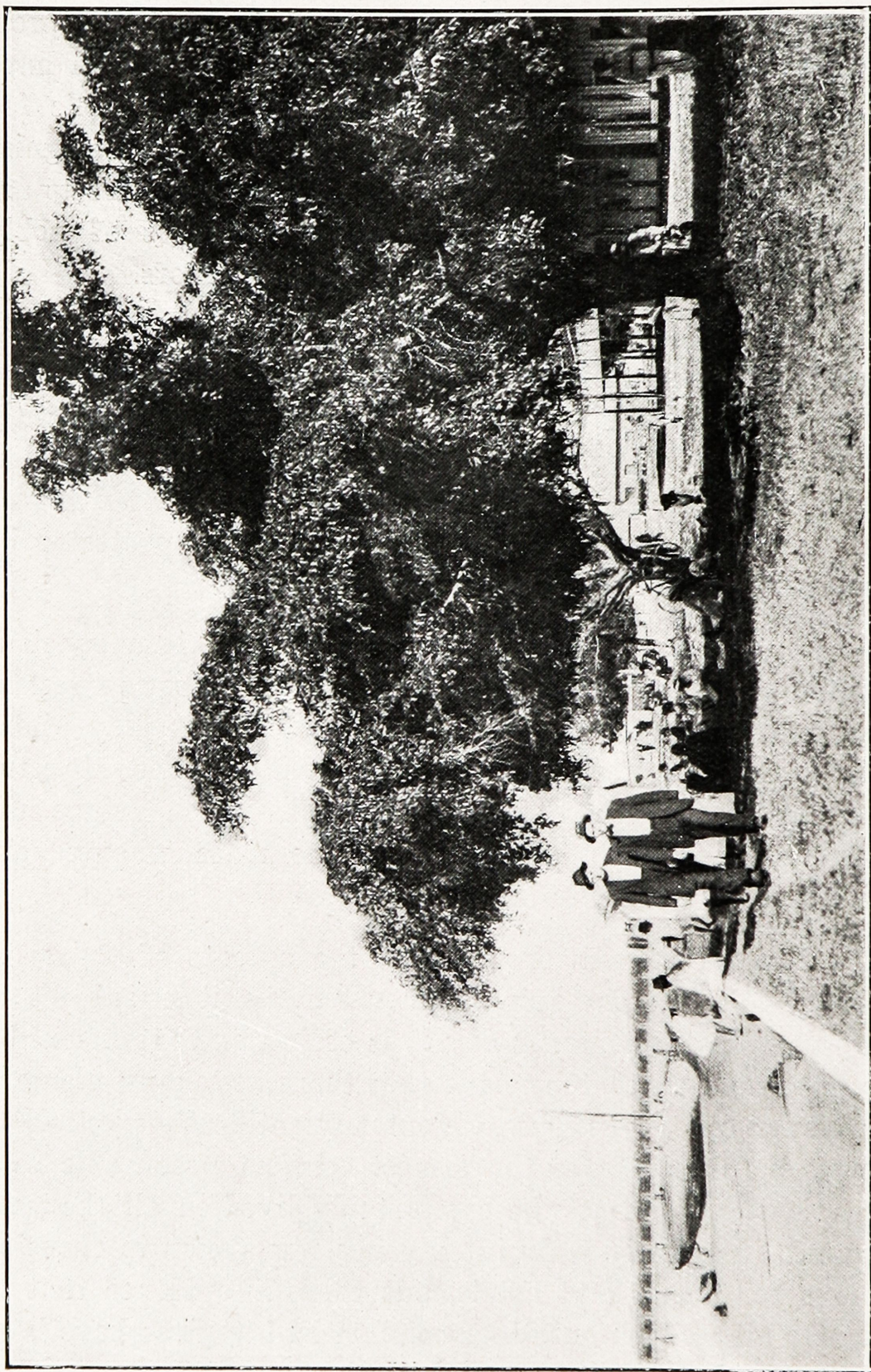
Governors, is a distinctly pretty and increasingly prosperous town. Sea, mountain, beach, and fertile soil have ensured its picturesqueness, and the men responsible for its original planning had the mental grace to recognise tropical requirements of space and shade. The streets are so wide that they gracefully contain avenues of nobly spreading trees, grassy central walks, and arbors.

The Strand or Esplanade is miles long, and for the whole of its length it is shaded by beautiful thickly foliated trees. Conspicuously beautiful among these are luxuriantly spreading weeping-figs, with their wealth of shaded, but always tender, green. Comfortable seats have been placed at frequent intervals, and the beach front is protected by a strongly built retaining wall.

In another portion of the town there is a spacious public park, but the Strand holds pride of place as a restful and salubrious rendezvous. Sometimes bands play under the trees, and family groups sit contentedly watching the waters of Trinity Bay and the hills which fringe the harbour's southern shore. Near the main wharves are public bathing enclosures.

For six months of the year the climate of Cairns is delightful. In the full summer months it is subject to tropical heat, but every day it is cooled and freshened by trade winds, with the result that there are many pleasant evenings and cool nights. Houses scientifically planned to meet the demand for the utmost comfort procurable in a tropical climate may be comfortably lived in all the year round. Formerly little intelligence was shown in choosing plans for homes and hotels, but there is evidence that in nearly all modern buildings comfort and hygiene have been first considerations of the architects.





BEACH AT CAIRNS.



The Cairns water supply provides water as pure and clear as any in the world. The district is blessed with numerous mountain waterfalls and busy streams, and Freshwater Creek, the source of the town water supply, has taken first-class honours in analytical tests.

Its proud position in export and import trade has made Cairns well worthy of its expensively built concrete wharves.

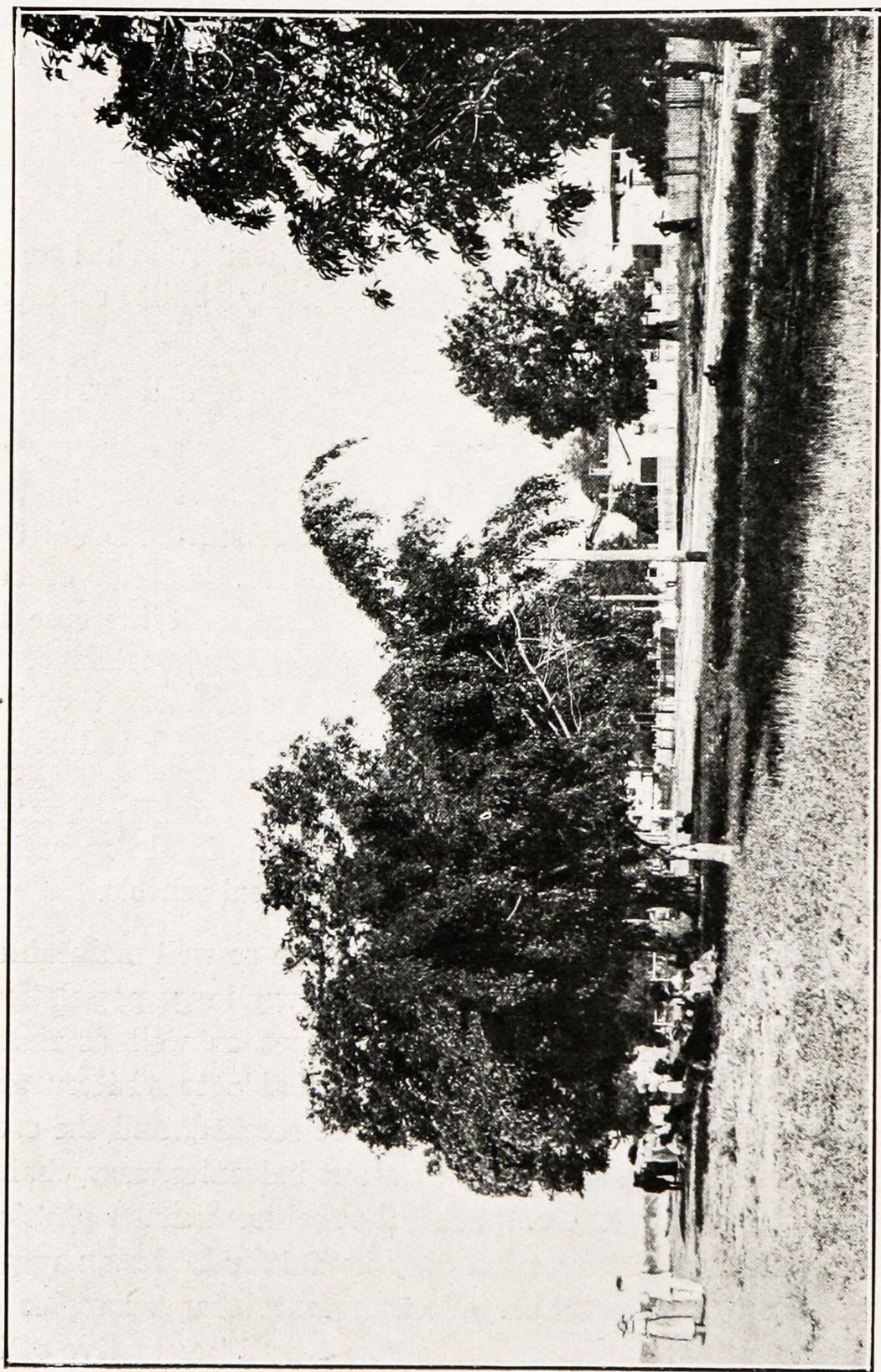
It is, too, the first important place of call for boats which come by way of Torres Strait.

Its geographical position ensures that it will be the first Australian port touched by the oversea trade *viâ* the Panama route, and the highly productive character of the district guarantees both rapid and consistent increase in export. Sugar, butter, fruit, maize, timber, metals come down enormously to the wharves, and the district's thriving industries necessitate a large commercial and industrial population for the port.

The State educational scheme in local operation embraces primary, secondary, and technical schools.

The School of Arts is an institution so well maintained that it would serve the purposes of a very large population. All the leading Australian newspapers as well as many country Press organs are made available to visitors and subscribers. The best periodicals are stocked, and the cool, well-ventilated building has pleasant balconies, easy chairs, tables for games, &c., so that all the requirements of physical ease and mental recreation may be fulfilled. In an upper hall there are a number of cases containing examples of the district's mineral richness, also others illustrative of its vegetable products.





MORE OF CAIRNS BEACH.



The business industries of the town include timber mills and furniture factories.

There are many large shops and stores, and all classes of trade are represented.

Gas and electric plants provide illumination.

There are several large public halls and picture theatres.

The Barron Shire Council, Chamber of Commerce, Harbour Board, Hospital Committee and other public bodies demonstrate the activities and forethought of the right men in the right place.

On the water front and in side streets are many charming homes, which stand in gardens luxuriant with brilliant foliage and flower.

The wide streets with their central or side avenues of giant fig and other shady trees and their liberal width of grass plots conform to modern ideas of town-planning, albeit they preceded the birth of the British Town-planning Association.

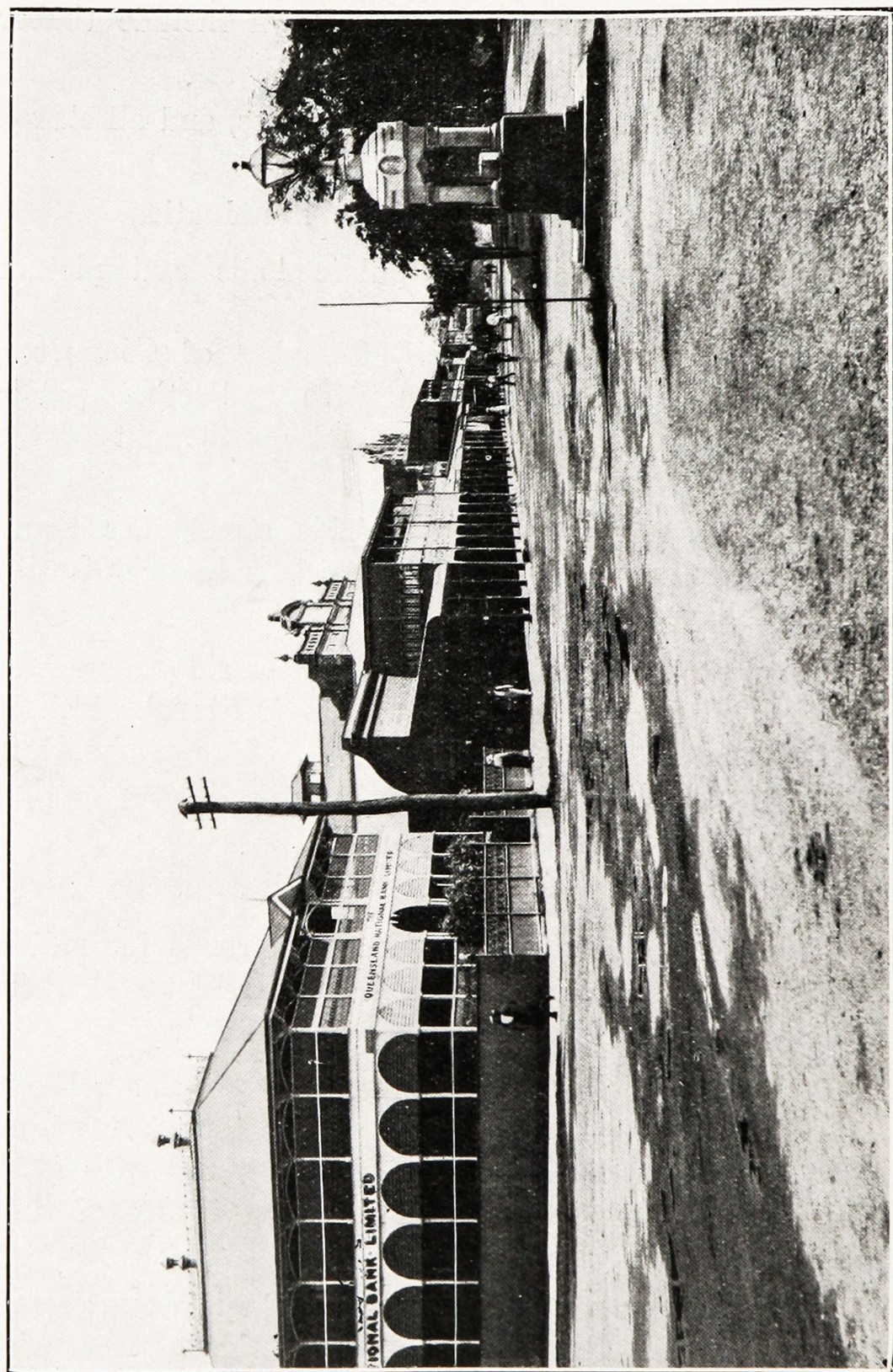
Three daily newspapers are printed locally.

There are gloriously beautiful bush roads for riding and driving parties, also an ocean beach resort at Double Island Point, which is reached after a short drive.

The inlet which so amply and safely serves as a harbour is 16 miles in length. Round its shores there are ample room and many facilities for shipbuilding, and with most of the requisite material near at hand a future of that kind may be looked for.

The wharves which lie close beside the business centre are connected with the railway, and undoubtedly those who have been responsible for the planning and progress of the





A BIT OF CAIRNS.



town have been content with nothing less than compactness and completeness.

As was the case in many tropical areas Cairns at its birth was to some extent malaria infested; but the opening up of the country, the reclaiming of mud flats and the removal of mangrove have resulted in the destruction of all malarial tendencies in the atmosphere and an assurance of good general health for the inhabitants.

### **Export Trade.**

Before passing on to describe minutely and enthusiastically the wonderfully beautiful railway routes which go out from Cairns over ranges and plateaux, something interestingly and appropriately may be told of the kind and quantity of the products which are carried on those railways to the seaboard. Cairns Chamber of Commerce reports for an ordinarily prosperous year show that they were:—

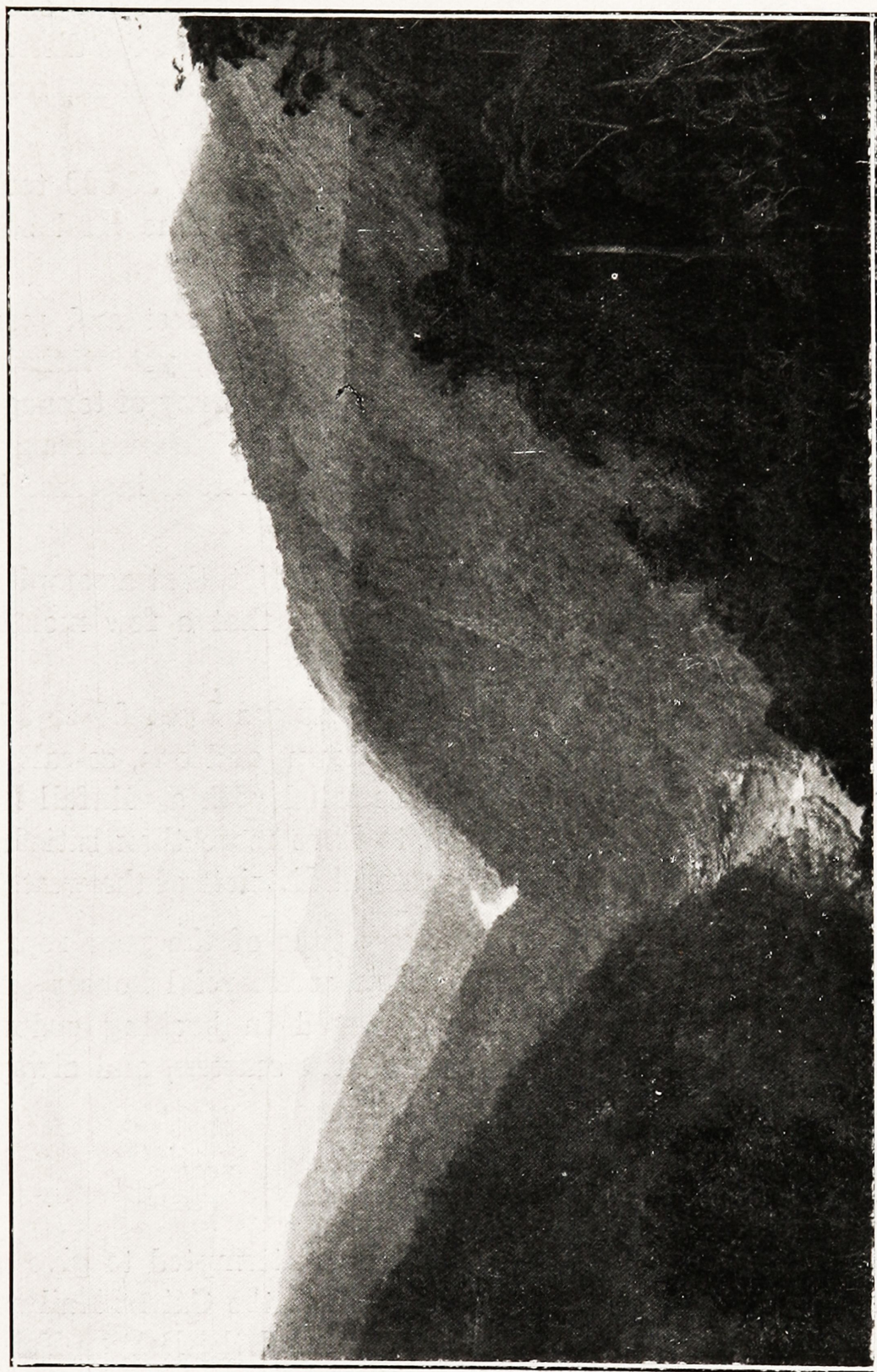
Antimony,	Maize,
Bananas,	Marsupial Skins,
Bark,	Meat,
Bismuth,	Molydenite,
Bismuth-Wolfram,	Sheep Skins,
Butter,	Scheelite,
Coffee,	Silver-Lead Ore,
Copper Ore	Silver-Lead Bullion,
Copper Matte,	Sugar (raw),
Cotton,	Tallow,
Fruit,	Timber,
Hides,	Tin Ore,
Horns, Hoofs and Hair	Tin Ingots,
Lime,	Tin Concentrates,
Live Animals,	Wolfram.





A VIEW OF BARRON GORGE.





CAIRNS GORGE.



The total tonnage of these exports was not far short of 100,000 tons, and when it is remembered that the district still is in the infancy of its industrial development, some idea of its genuine possibilities may be grasped.

The export of raw sugar alone exceeded 30,000 tons, and thousands of acres of suitable sugar-cane land still bear their original weight of virgin scrub.

Some of the metals named are the rarest and most valuable products of the mineral kingdom, yet statistics reveal their annual export in an imposing array of tonnage. For instance, the average annual export of pure wolfram is about 400 tons, and there has been a constant increase in the export tonnage of molybdenite.

So genuinely progressive is the district, that a compiler of facts fears to quote figures in case that a few months may make them obsolete.

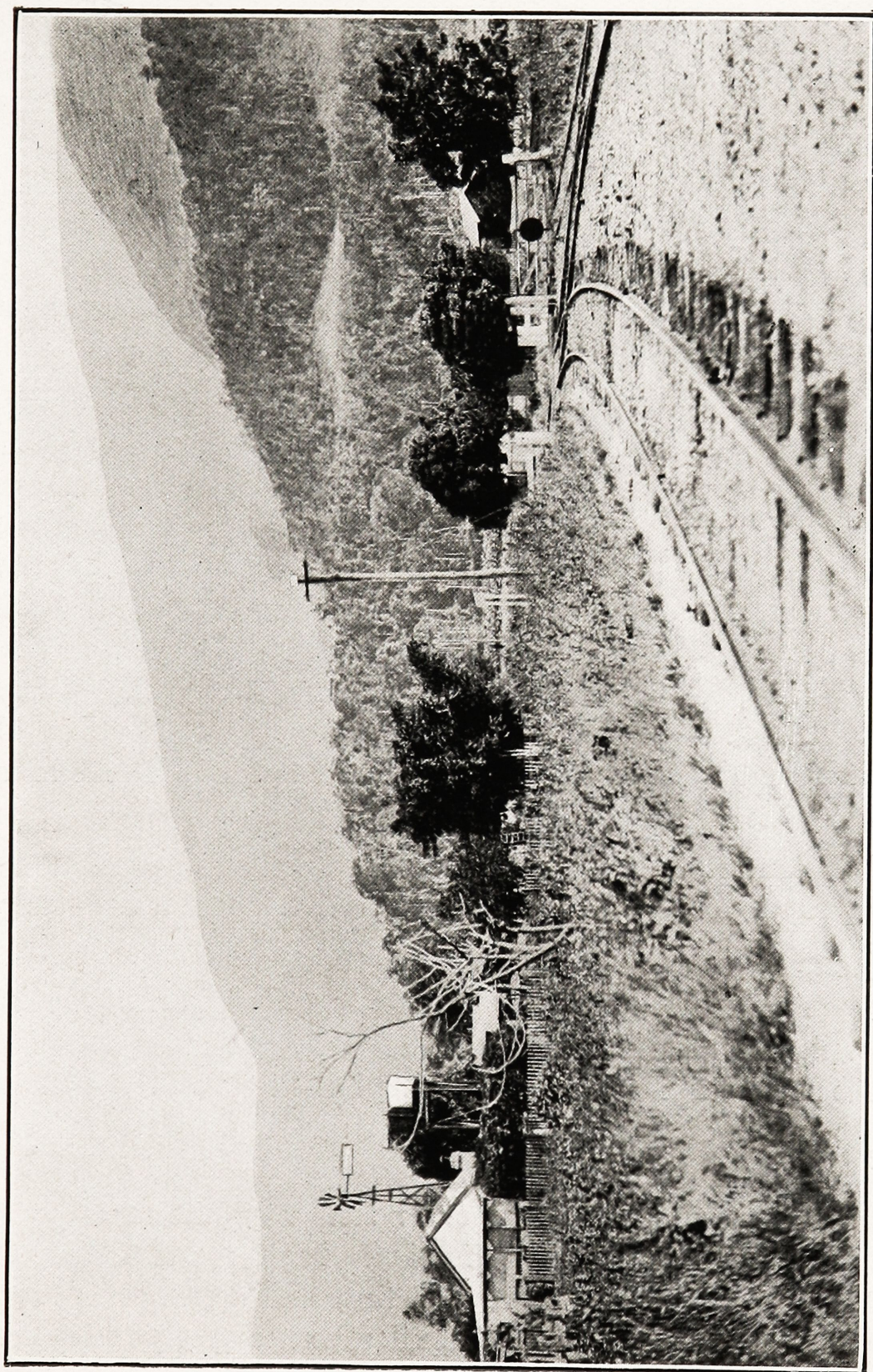
The annual rainfall of Cairns ranges from 80 to 150 inches. Droughts are almost unknown, and one, so-called, which occurred in 1915, was associated with a rainfall for the total year copious enough to have more than satisfied all the demands of the great pastoral districts of the west.

In Cairns on any day at any time of the year representatives of the great Australian commercial houses and agencies may be met busily engaged in booking orders. They come and go as regularly as the seasons, and always apparently in great content.

### **A Grandly Beautiful Route.**

Many accomplished writers have attempted to give an adequate pen picture of that portion of the Cairns Railway which lies between the harbour town and the Barron Falls, but none have succeeded so well as to satisfy themselves,





REDLYNCH, CAIRNS RAILWAY.



or to give to the reader an impression wholly worthy of the beauty and grandeur of the way. Just as there are some joys too deep for words, so are there some scenes so thrilling in their aspect, so divine in recollection, that words, no matter how glowing and enthusiastic, seem to blemish rather than to adorn the beauties which they design to praise. A beautiful scene, too, has many aspects, according to the point of view from which it is seen, the hour or the character of the day.

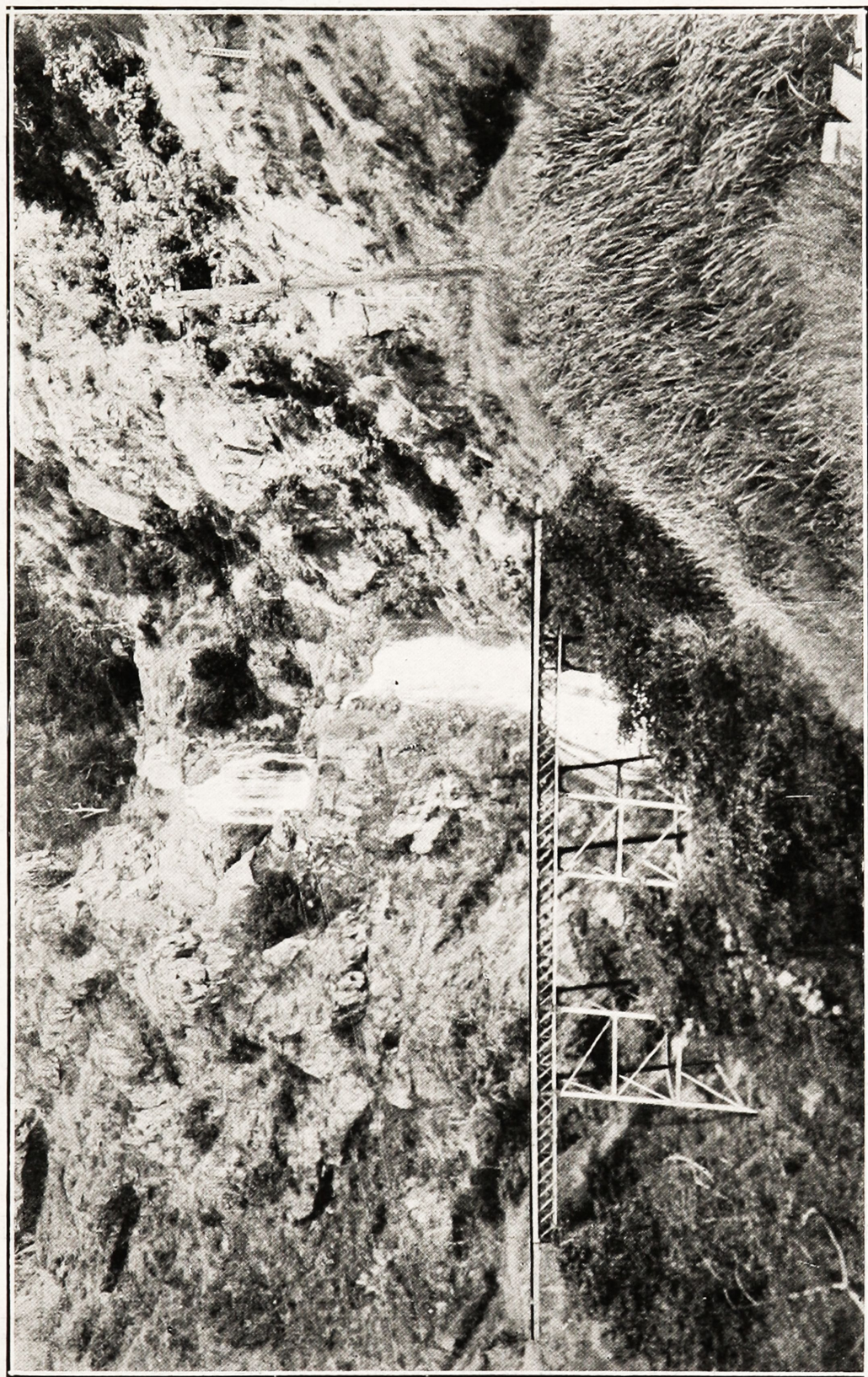
Presuming that the tourist may make Kuranda—the highland township beyond the Barron Falls—his headquarters, and that he may travel many times between Kuranda and Cairns, he will find that habit brings no sense of careless intimacy. The mystery will stay, the desire not to miss viewing one item in the beautiful whole will remain as intense, and the way itself will have new beauties and grander aspects to disclose on each occasion of transit. So much of the impression, too, depends on whether the way is by the side of the gorge up to the hills, or by the side of the gorge down towards the sea.

Almost immediately after Cairns is left on the up journey the way leads by pleasant homesteads, large orchards, or typical bush.

At Redlynch, the rich agricultural character of the soil is plainly asserted, and here, as elsewhere along the line, the fresh or deep greens, rich pink, or bright scarlet of the leaves of trees and shrubs set the tropical standard of adornment.

Crotons, caladia, and other foliage plants are seen at their highest state of perfection. Mango and native fig trees are so glorified by shaded tints and density of foliage that even native-born Queenslanders scarcely recognise them in their super-brilliant garb.





"CLEAR AS CRYSTAL," STONEY CREEK.



Near Redlynch the Queensland Government for many years maintained a garden acreage, known as the Kamerunga Nursery, as an experimental station for the cultivation of tropical crops, fruits, &c. Though not now maintained for that purpose the nursery is still interesting, revealing as it does a very wide range of products of proven or possible commercial value, and other beautiful and rare species, whose chief function is to provide ornamentation or shade. Of this latter character is the Travellers' Tree, a palm with huge, fanshaped leaves, and which, when tapped, supplies water of good drinking quality.

Cocoanuts, bread fruit, jack fruit, tamarinds, lemons, and several varieties of little known tropical fruits still flourish.

Bananas, coffee, para rubber, dates, vanilla, cinnamon and other spices show a special liking for the soil.

Formerly, many experiments were made with different varieties of sugar-cane, plants of that great wealth-producing species were supplied to growers, and advice given in regard to sugar-cane farming.

Cotton, kapok, tobacco, arrowroot, ginger, and peanuts have been successfully grown at Kamerunga, and their commercial value as local products proven.

Kamerunga Nursery is a pleasant place. It is prettily situated close to a small mountain, and its pretty domestic establishments are embowered in vine and blossom.

Though it is no longer an experimental station the "nursery" remains an interesting illustration of the truth and falsity of various theories on tropical agriculture.

Freshwater Creek, a deep, clear stream with very interestingly wooded banks, associated with shady glens, is crossed *en route*.



### **The Barron Gorge.**

The famous Barron Falls are 22 miles by rail from Cairns, and the journey to them and to Kuranda, which lies a mile and a-half beyond, is charming all the way. After banana plantations, pawpaw groves and patches of tangled vine scrub have been passed, the train begins to climb the Range. From the carriage windows passengers look down on pleasant glades and tall timbers. Miles away Redlynch and other villages are seen lying peacefully in valleys which stretch away towards the sea. The sea itself is embraced in the backward view, and a lovelier scene of rural settlement is unimaginable.

The upper cliffs of the overhanging mountains show an unusual redness in their colouring, and all round and about is rarity.

But rarity of an altogether grander sort is to follow.

For a time the train dashes in and out of short tunnels, but each return to broad daylight reveals a scenic gem—a brilliant bank of tropical foliage, a riot of tangled creepers and festoons.

Soon the way is borne upon a continuous cutting sheer on the left bank of a wonderfully fashioned and awe-inspiring gorge. The cuttings are brilliantly red of soil, vividly green of verdure.

The way is circuitous, and far ahead its intimate red and green, its overhead heights, its underneath depths and steeps may be glimpsed.

Far, far down below, in a narrow, rocky chasm, the foaming, tumbling Barron River hurriedly takes its way in its eager haste to tell its story to the sea. It tells the story in a loud roar as it goes, but so high above is the



viewpoint that the roar comes to the ears merely as a melodious murmur set to a minor key.

Except for the existence of the railway the scene is as wild and grand as it was when only nomadic blacks and wild birds knew of its existence. The opposite bank of the canyon remains as wildly wooded, the stream meets none but natural impediments. The red steeps of the cuttings add to, rather than detract from, the faultless picture.

Fourteen miles from Cairns the train pauses at Stoney Creek station, where there are pretty red-roofed buildings standing among handsome mango and other beautifully foliated trees on a tiny plateau overlooking the gorge.

Here, too, are the Stoney Creek Falls, crystal clear, falling in large volume from a dizzy height above the line, and passing under a picturesque bridge into another series of falls, which eventually mingle with the main waters of the gorge.

Many backward glimpses of these lovely falls are gained as the train passes on over the mileage beyond. For fully 10 miles the way overlooks the grand gorge, and passes along its definite middle edge.

On the way Knight's Falls are crossed at a point where they briefly exhibit a natural level.

Robb's Monument, a high block of granite, named in memory of the man who so faithfully fulfilled the tremendously difficult task of building the railway, stands strikingly beside the line which divides it from its original association with a rugged granite cliff.

Undoubtedly, the tropical character of the gorge makes for intensified attractiveness as compared to some of the widely advertised canyons of colder regions. On the opposite side may be seen the silver gleam of many





RED BLUFF AND GLACIER ROCK, CAIRNS RAILWAY.



a miniature cataract. According to the season of the year there may appear patches of white or yellow bloom and rare glimpses of crimson. But for the greater part the living garment which clothes the steeps is darkly green and completely appropriate. It provides sanctuary for thousands of beautiful birds, and, invariably, pure white species fly out of and beside it.

A roar of mightily, deeply falling waters and uprising mists of spray proclaim near approach to the Barron Falls.

### **The Barron Falls.**

No photograph of the Barron Falls in flood has ever given them one-half their natural award of grandeur in volume, or suggested more than a fraction of the beauty of their surroundings. For a mile before the waters reach their giant leap they roar and foam as they make their way unevenly over a bed strewn with great boulders. All fury and foam they take their leap of 900 feet into a swirling pool, and then pass on over lesser leaps through the winding way of the gorge so impressively draped with wild beauty and so eloquent of power.

Here is one of Nature's places which man must never be permitted to disfigure or spoil. Such a scene spiritualises travel, and compels profoundest respect for unseen powers.

When absorbing with the eyes the wonderful beauty of the canyon the mind naturally turns to thoughts of its origin, of the sources of its angry stream—those many silvery branches and merry cataracts on highlands and plateaux.

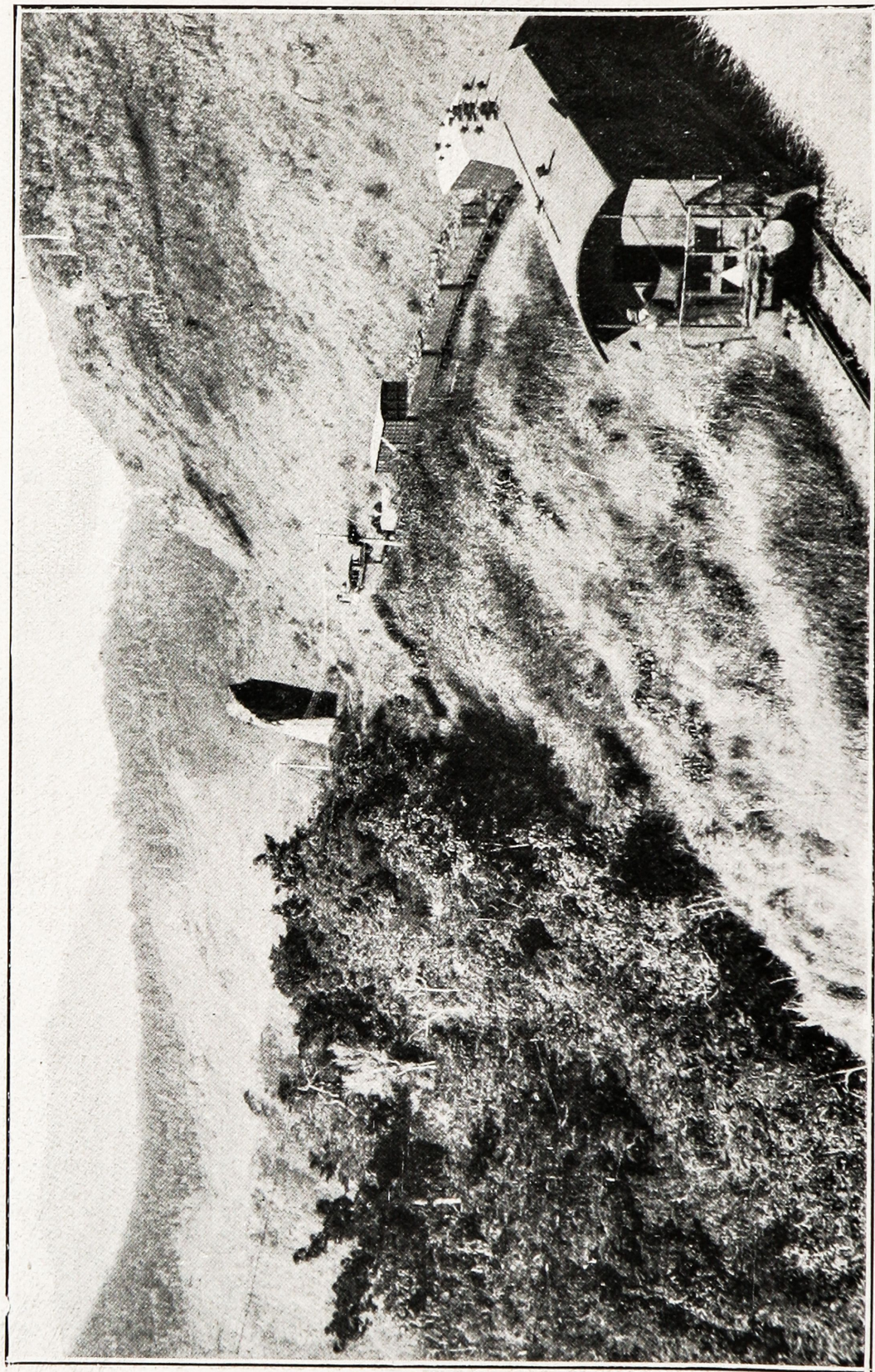
Was the great jagged gash violently made in a once unbroken range, or did it occur by slow erosion and gradual removal of huge beds of rock?





BARRON FALLS, FULL FLOOD.





SCENE ON CAIRNS RANGE.



Undoubtedly, the present aspect of the gorge suggests an origin in hours rather than in ages, even though time since has added so much beautiful disguise. A mighty chasm graciously clothed on its sides, and mighty rather than cruel in its depths—such is the aspect to-day of the rocky rent once so violently riven. Sunlight and a celestial sky give the gorge one brilliant class of expression; clouds, greyness, and floating mist another, equally beautiful and addedly mysterious.

No true nature lover will be content to see the Falls only once or twice, but will pass backwards and forwards several times in efforts to see the whole grand exhibition, and will be well rewarded for his pains. He will, perhaps, on some day of shower and sunshine see the Falls in close association with an arch of prismatic colours rising from their base and appearing to rest almost immediately above their top. He may see them increased in volume by storm waters—their green mosses hidden by foam, their song of victory a nobler shout.

Nature has made bigger things than this gorge and its cataracts, but never one more grandly perfect.

### **Viewpoints.**

Visitors who wish to “do” the Falls and Gorge thoroughly may make their headquarters at the charming mountain village, Kuranda, which is a mile and a-half from the Barron Falls Railway Station. At the Falls a kiosk with dining-table, benches, and water tank have been provided, and there is also a waiting-room for railway passengers. A long series of steps leads down to the foot of the falls, but the return climb is so difficult that all





CAIRNS RANGE.



but the young and active should avoid descending beyond that portion of the way that is spiral and associated with a railing and frequent resting-places.

Mango trees and the magnificently red-blossomed *poinciana regia* have been planted by the way, and some have reached a luxuriant stage of growth. When the *poinciana* is in bloom its broad spreading top is a mass of red, and fallen petals make a carpet of red below.

Paths have been made to special viewpoints—O'Malley's Chair, a rough stone seat named after a well-known Australian politician who once made it a throne of genial loquacity, and Lady Robinson's Lookout provide soul-inspiring views of falls, rocks of battlemented aspect, structures not unlike ruined castles, mossy cliffs, and natural fern gardens.

About it all there is a strong accent of the prehistoric. Geology vaguely sets its time limits, and scant knowledge still asks, "How old?" But—

"We ask not of the sunlight,  
Nor of the wind, 'How old?'  
The legend on the talent's face  
Dates not the unchanging gold."

After all, even highest knowledge knows mainly only that things are, and joy is in things natural as they are, and not as they were in times so old or wild that they have no record. Reverence, too, belongs quite as much to the actual present as to the hidden past, but mystery must ever have its charm, and imagination its picture gallery.

A walk along the railway line to Robb's Monument and beyond makes for greater intimacy with the gorge than can be obtained from a carriage window or observation balcony. From the train the most influential features of the view are the deep-down stream and the opposite wall,



except where the curving track graciously grants a backward or forward view; but a walk along the railway levels reveals much more of forest-clad precipice, giant chasm and wild waterway.

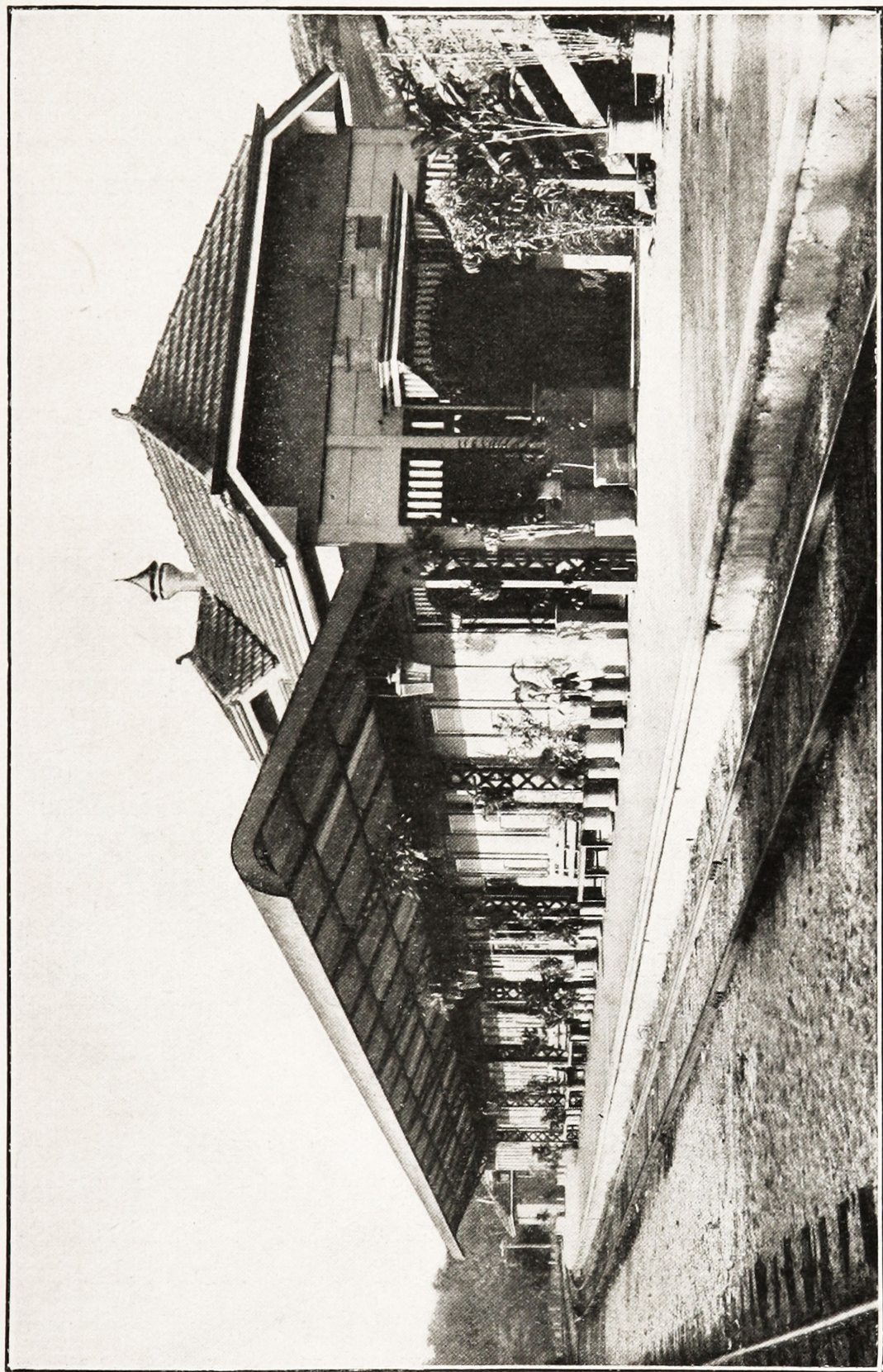
### **Kuranda.**

Kuranda has many charms quite independent of its proximity to the Falls. It has its place in civilisation's scheme right in the heart of tropical beauty, yet its altitude assures for it the crispness of autumnal evenings and dew-bedecked bracing mornings even at midsummer. Its roads and buildings stand on rich soil won from virgin scrub, and grassy slopes and closely pressing scrub have preserved its fresh, bushland aspect. Artistic architecture, red roofs, and a wealth of ornamental plants make of the railway station a perfect gem suited to so rich a setting. There are wealth of colour and variety of forms in the foliage of the well tended shrubs and creepers, and immediately below the station flows the River Barron, here spreading shallowly in a wide boulder-strewn bed, but a little lower down merging into a lake-like reach closely confined in high banks, and seeming to offer a special invitation to rowers and swimmers. There is generally a boat here for the convenience of the residents of a picturesque coffee plantation on the opposite bank.

But clearings on the opposite bank are few. For the greater part it is clothed in forest primeval, dense, mysterious and magnetically beckoning.

There are two first-class hotels and one second-class at Kuranda, also private lodgings and boarding-houses. These, as well as the private residences, have beautiful lawns and gardens. The gardens glitter with colour and brilliancy. Gorgeous, highly perfumed flowers, the noble





KURANDA RAILWAY STATION.



dark-green and dark-red of mango trees, the brilliant variegation of crotons and orchids in full flower, the crimson of poinsettias or *poinciana regia*, the yellow, heliotrope, pink, purple, and red of flowering creepers, and trailing over hedges and fences the constantly flowering blue convolvulus.

And, as if the flora provided colouring insufficient, butterflies of brilliant colouring and beautiful marking fly among and rest upon the flowers.

The grass plots are vividly green, the roads show redly among grassy borders.

A butterfly museum which contains the constantly replenished collection of Mr. F. P. Dodd provides delight to all who visit it. Nowhere in Australia is there such a beautiful exhibition of butterflies, moths, dragon flies, and other insect species. Such diversity and brilliance of colouring, such wonderfully delicate and varied marking is almost inconceivable. From giant moths down to tiniest butterfly the specimens ramble, each beautiful in itself, and with its beauty embellished and emphasised by Mr. Dodd's eminently artistic arrangement. Once Mr. Dodd went as far as Papua for his specimens, but found only a few butterflies that were unfamiliar. The woods and dales round about Kuranda are more than rich enough for all the purposes of the naturalist, whose specialties are the rarest and most beautiful of winged insects.

At night at Kuranda thousands of fireflies illuminate the darkness. Often they enter the houses, and it is not uncommon to see half a dozen or more gleaming and reflecting in their broken or circular flights within a sleeping apartment.

Beautiful views surround Kuranda on every side, a





BARRON FALLS.



climate temperate at all seasons, and never bitterly wintry keeps its inhabitants and frequenters in a state of radiant vigor.

In such a place anyone but an absolute invalid must become an early riser. The rising mists are ever an interesting study as they drift and roll away before the awakened sun, distorted and shattered into the tree-tops, or sweeping up the hillsides in masses of white fleecy clouds.

Summer visitors often associate with their early rising a river swim and return tingling healthily from the exercise.

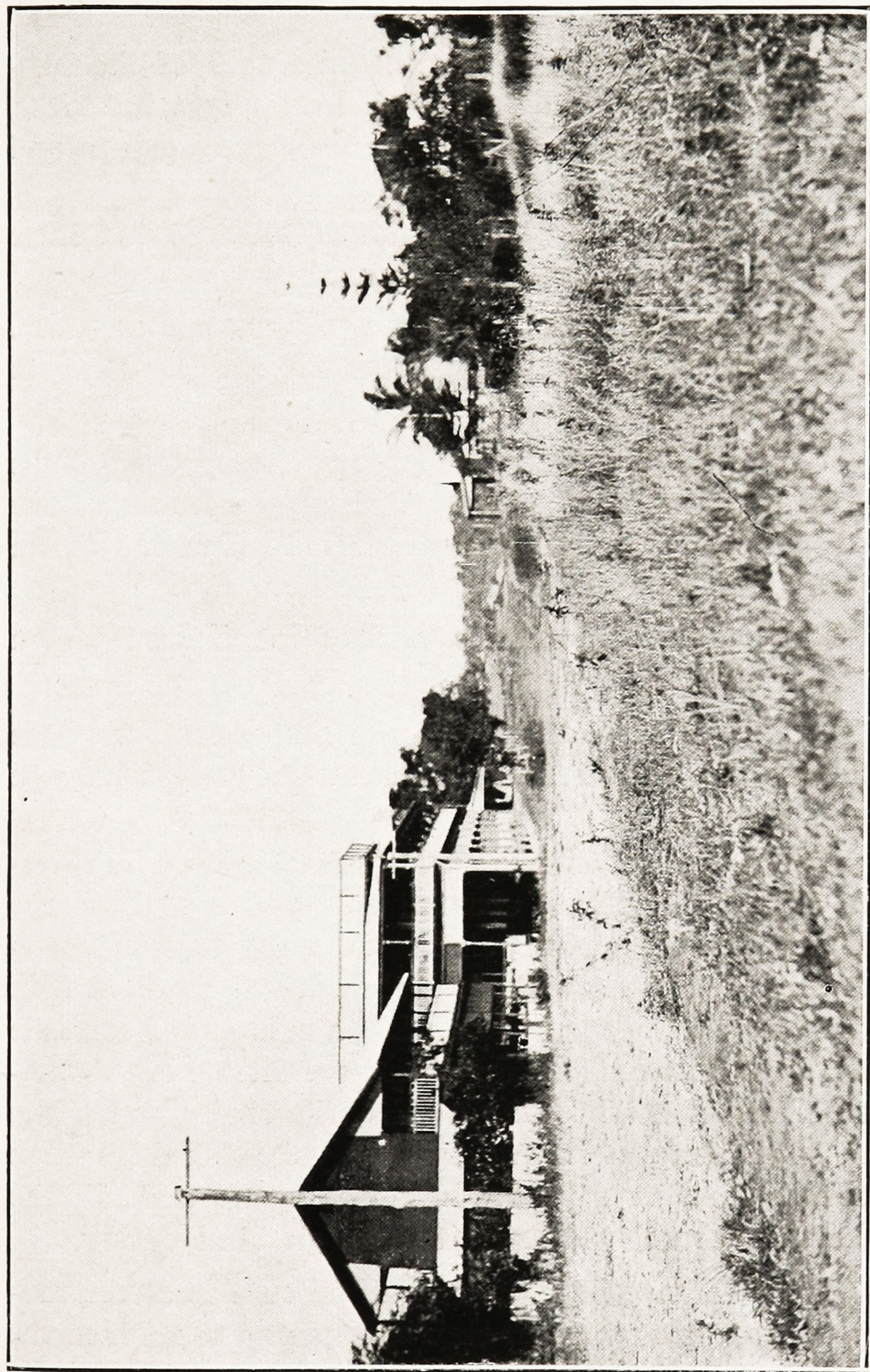
Much of the surrounding scrub has been preserved in its virgin state, except that paths or driving roads have been made through it for the benefit of pedestrians or riders. In this jungle with its trees and vines interlacing high overhead in a superb leafy canopy there are many beautiful botanical specimens still unnamed and uncatalogued by science.

There are, too, unfamiliar birds of brilliant colouring. Sometimes a tiny bird with red as its predominant colouring and little larger than a bee may be seen in the second scrub growths near the river, and tiny as it is there is genuine significance in its warble.

There still is excellent scrub land available for selection near Kuranda. After being cleared it could be devoted to agriculture or mixed farming, and both health and prosperity should wait on such enterprise.

As a site for private boarding-schools or State colleges Kuranda scarcely could be surpassed, and it seems certain that it ultimately will gain a considerable increase of population, because of its capacity to supply the climatic needs of students in comparison to the climate of the large towns on the coast.





KURANDA.



### Recreations at Kuranda.

City visitors to Kuranda will miss none of the comforts of civilisation. They will find electric light, hot baths, roof gardens, lounges, refinement of furnishing, cuisine and service, telephone communication, &c.

Grass tennis courts, croquet lawns, billiards and other games assist to while away the hours.

Excursions can be arranged for every day of the week. The Barron Falls and surroundings make a grand excuse for a day's picnic.

On another day visitors may go to Stoney Creek Falls by the down train to Cairns, and after spending some glorious hours there, they may return to Kuranda by an up train which arrives in time for dinner.

Surprise Creek Falls also will be found worthy of a special excursion.

Street's coffee plantation, Rocky Hill View, Fern Tree Gully, Double Island Mountain, and other trips may be suggested.

An idyllic excursion is that to the Fairyland Tea Gardens, which are distant about a mile and a half up the river, and on its opposite shore. A coo-ee brings a boatman across to convey visitors to the natural scrub gardens and arboreal grandeur, amidst which tea is served at rustic tables by a deft little handmaiden—a veritable but dexterously graceful child of the wood. The chairs and tables used in the teagardens are artistically fashioned of scrub timbers. Near at hand are romantic walks, and all who make this excursion declare it to be an ideal outing.

Hampers for picnic parties are procurable at the railway refreshment rooms, or may be made up to order at the hotels.





SURPRISE CREEK.





A SCRUB VIEW, KURANDA.



It happens that some visitors, because of the state of their health or their advanced march on the way of life, desire more than all else, during their stay at Kuranda, rest amidst pure air and beautiful surroundings. To these the comfortable accommodation and the views from the balconies make special appeal.

More active sojourners should enjoy a study of the metalliferous character of some of the cliffs and boulders, or should find a gentle kind of excitement in orchid and fern hunting expeditions to Rainbow and other creeks.

For right-minded persons the days and nights at Kuranda will never pall, no matter how long may be the stay, and what is seen and enjoyed there will only create zest for enjoyment of the beauties and wonders, the fertility and productiveness which lie inland on the main and branch railway routes.

At Kuranda visitors will learn to recognise and keep clear of stinging-tree, which there, as in the grander primeval scrubs of the interior, aggressively performs the duties of sentinel of the woods. One such tree, specially cultivated for the enlightenment of visitors, may be seen at Kuranda Railway Station.

The lawyer-vine, a pretty climbing cane which has a nasty habit of hooking on to clothing, is another native product which also is at its best, spectacularly, when admired from a safe distance, though it must be told, to its credit, that it has commercial value as a material for use in chair and basket-making.

### **Voices of the Night.**

Before passing on to tell of the great field for settlement on the Atherton Tableland and the country beyond





HEAD OF BARRON FALLS.



it, some special praise may be given, because it is so well earned, to the peculiar beauty of high-placed Kuranda's evening hours.

“ Here silence hath sound, and darkness hath a tongue,  
A myriad murmurs when the stars are hung  
Arise from wood and riverside and lea.”

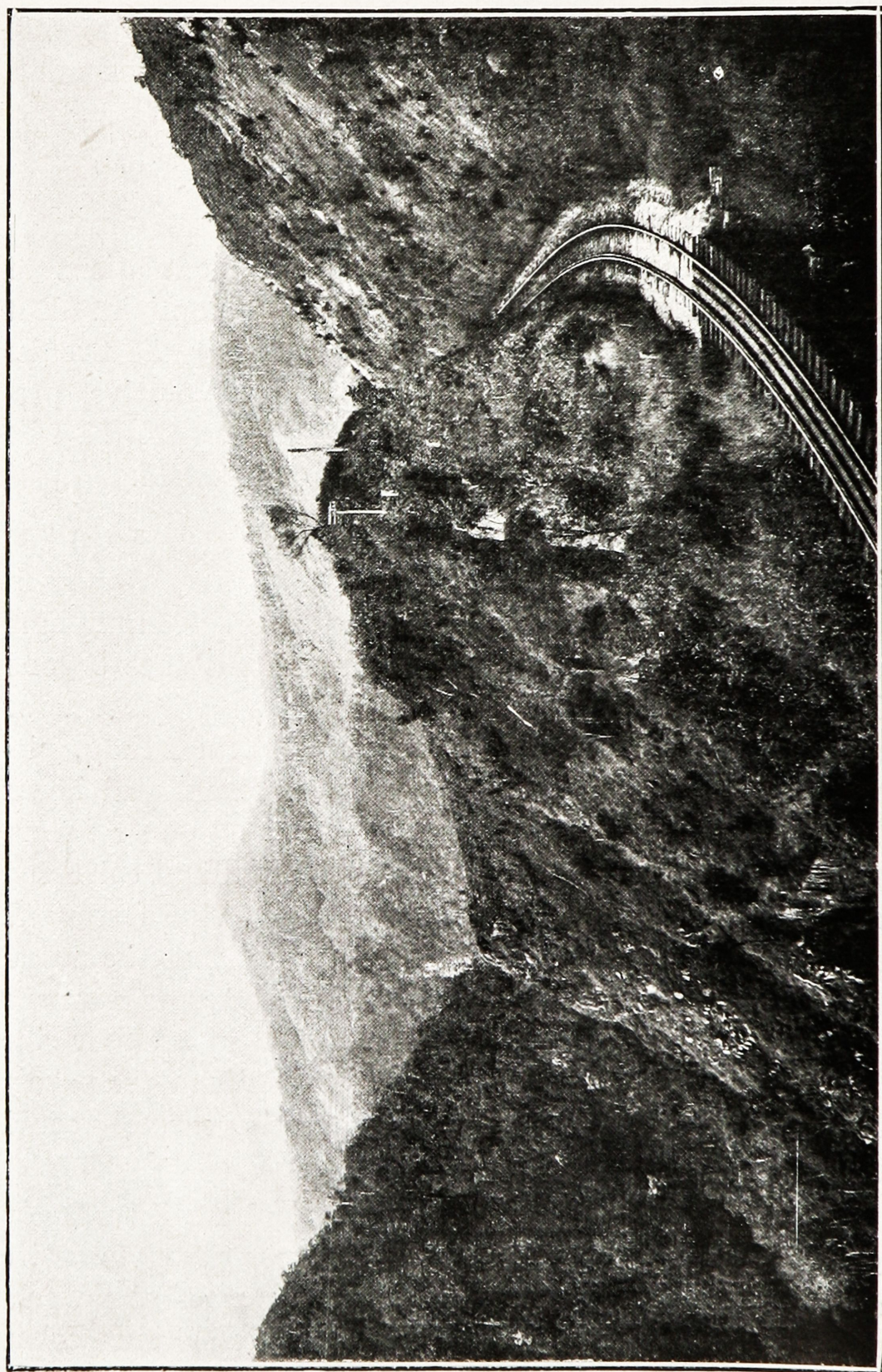
Fireflies flit, the weird but musical modulations of birds break through the softer murmurs of the night. But the sounds are set to a lullaby lilt; watching the fireflies induces a pleasant drowsiness, and sleep, restorative, preservative sleep unfailingly visits the pillows of all who sojourn at Kuranda in “the summer of the world.”

### **Cairns Railway continued.**

Beauty, richness of soil, and wealth of water remain faithful to the railway for a considerable distance beyond Kuranda. The Barron, forceful and complaining, flows immediately beside. On its opposite banks are hilly, picturesque farms whose homesteads stand on natural lawns which slope to the edge of the river's bank. Other farms, fertile orchards, and gardens ablaze with brilliant colouring lie beside the railroad. Patches of jungle, vine festooned, and frequently flowering, are so close that their botanical wealth is seen as an open book. The landscape presents a series of undulations and at some distance on either side it is buttressed by high hills. The altitude is not far short of 2,000 feet, and for salubrity the situation scarcely could be surpassed.

But the highest degree of beauty and fertility rarely remains with a long-distance railway throughout its entire length. Almost all the great train routes of the world are bordered or interspersed by belts of desolation. That is not the case with the Cairns Railway; but undeniably





ON CAIRNS RANGE.



the way for a time becomes much less rich and much less interesting, though still of some value as a grazing area, and well watered, and invigorating in its atmospheric quality. The timbers are of no special value, and pandanus, a species of palm, presents perhaps the most interesting foliage. But both naturalists and ordinary beauty-lovers find much of beauty and interest in the flora of this flatter, poorer land, and it may yet happen that science, having discovered its special faculties, will contrive greatly to enhance its productive and commercial value.

The Barron River is again approached at Biboohra, where there are very large meatworks, which employ a number of men, and despatch large quantities of meat overseas.

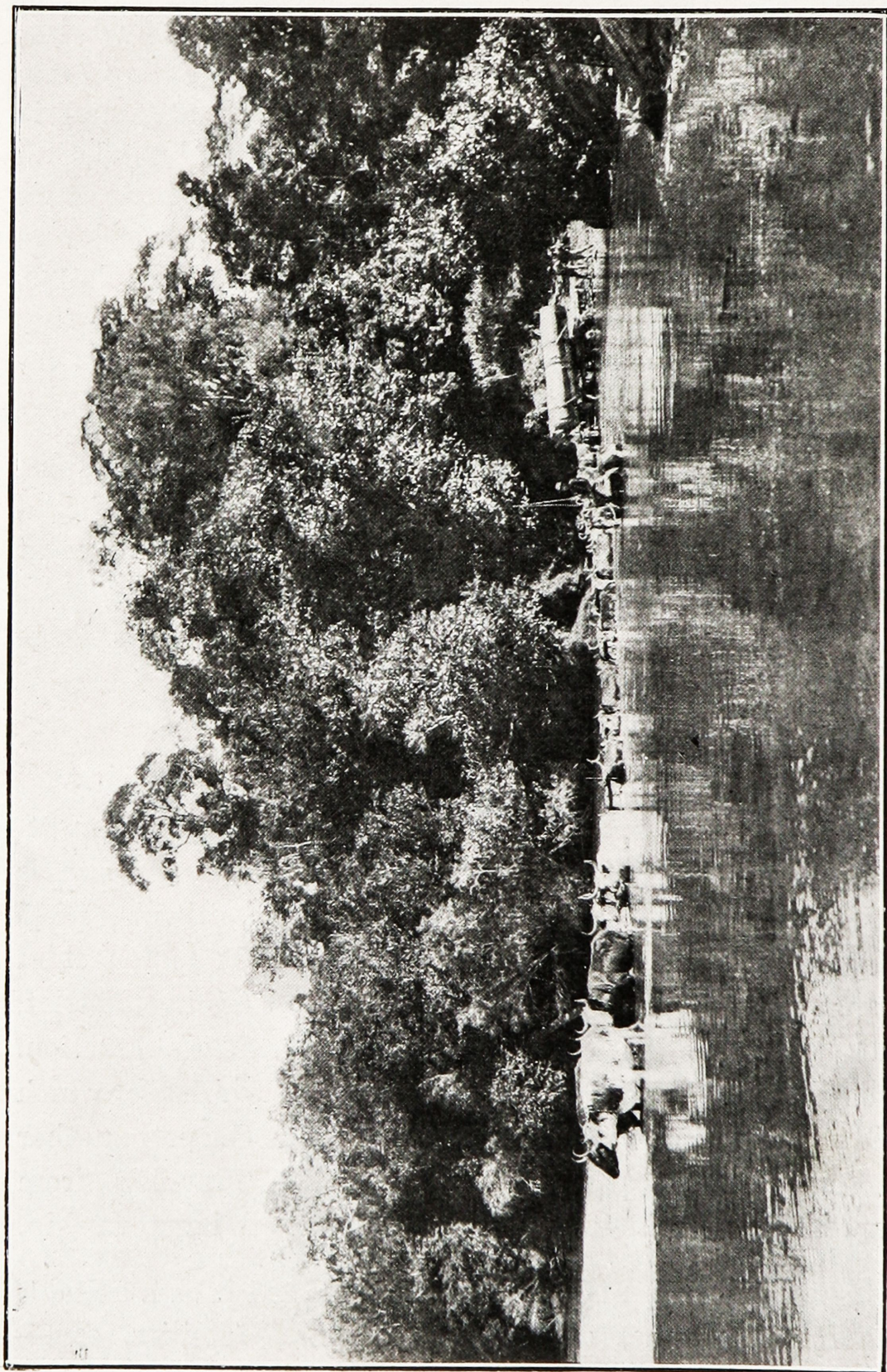
Close to Biboohra a portion of a tremendously large mining area is entered upon.

### **Mareeba.**

Mareeba, a town with a mining history of great importance, also is situated on the Barron River. Its site is perfectly level, its soil bright red, and its altitude, 1,325 feet, assures for it cool summer nights. It is the chief business centre of the Walsh and Tinaroo mining district, and it also has special importance as a railway junction. From it branches out a line of railway to Chillagoe, which railway also has a branch leading to Mount Garnet, another mining centre. Another railway which branches from Mareeba goes to Mount Molloy, a copper-mining township.

The salubrity of Mareeba has suggested it as a suitable site for the homes of nomadic workers' families, consequently its population remains permanent. It contains





TIMBER TEAMS CROSSING BARRON RIVER.



some good hotels, a fine district hospital, and all the ordinary conveniences of life in town. A busy timber mill and extensive ore-buying form portion of its special enterprise.

The position of Mareeba as the business centre of an extensive mining district made it a suitable place in which to establish a State Assay Office. The samples assayed there are mostly the rare metals, wolfram, molybdenite, etc., and the Government assay certificates there obtainable have proved very valuable in ensuring more satisfactory conditions in regard to the sale of ore.

There is a goldfield only about three miles away, from which metal has been obtained for a number of years.

The Barron, at Mareeba, is broad and usually placid. The area is particularly well watered. The River Mitchell, which has perennially running tributaries, rises in sandy flats within a few miles of Mareeba, and for several miles flows northwards parallel to and within a few miles of the much larger Barron River.

### **The Atherton Tableland.**

A very great improvement in the soil and timbers is noted before Tolga, a junction station on the main Cairns Railway, and within the area of the famous Atherton Tableland, is reached. Dense vine scrubs on gradual elevations proclaim a region of rich soil and heavy rainfall. Richness is still more evident when Atherton township is reached, a shore distance further on.

### **Atherton's Industries.**

“Atherton has only one drawback. That is the super-richness of its soil.”



Such was the enigmatic statement of a prosperous resident. The puzzle was solved when it was explained that the loose character of the rich volcanic soil of the Tableland makes effective road-building very difficult, and that consequently Atherton township—portion of a rateable shire still in its infancy—is not the cleanest possible place for pedestrians in wet weather. There is so much rain in Atherton, too, in the regular rainy season that hard roads there seem to be intensely desirable, and undoubtedly a town so prosperous and so rapid in advancement must before long receive the reward of roads good enough at all times for its purposes. It forms portion of Tinaroo Shire, and its shire councillors are practical men who know and appreciate the Tableland's immense basic resources and resultant achievements.

Like most bush towns of Australia, Atherton had its origin in the settlement which grew around the first public-house of call on the bullock-dray or pack-horse track. At that time there were no railways running out from Cairns, and Port Douglas, a harbour further north, was accepted as the export centre. First pack-horse teams and later bullock-drays passed over the tableland, *en route* from the Herberton mines to Port Douglas, and the main street of Atherton township stands exactly where the old road to the sea-board used to be.

The tableland and township have derived their name from the original Tableland squatter, John Atherton, who brought his cattle and horses overland through wild bush ways from Rockhampton, and settled with his family amidst a scene wildly rich and wholly primeval. It is said that they were years *en route*, also that Mr. Atherton was really a squatter-explorer who knew nothing of the region ahead, but who was determined to settle, and who finally did settle,



on the best land that he discovered in his wanderings. He made his home in the more open forest country, close beside which there pressed dense, richly timbered jungle, rising from volcanic soil as rich as any ever born of Nature's angry outbursts. Where once his herds roamed over a noble, primitive acreage, to-day there are numerous neighbourly farms, modern homesteads, windmills, dairies, agricultural townships, depots and factories.

The Golden Grove Butter Factory at Atherton in its half-yearly report, presented in June, 1917, recorded the manufacture of 778,752 lb. of butter in the half-year, and since that date dairying operations have so greatly increased that the establishment of another butter factory was necessitated.

The rapid progress of the dairying industry can be gauged from the fact that in 1909 there were only 4 suppliers of cream, and in 1917 the number of suppliers had increased to 300. The latter number does not represent a third of the Tableland's carrying capabilities.

At the beginning of 1918 there was still much unimproved land available, and it also was affirmed that the farmers who then were operating were unable to cope with the labour of fully stocked farms, and consequently were anxious to place at least 100 families on the share system. By that system houses and implements are provided to the newcomers, who are expected to provide their own furniture, but who receive a liberal share of the proceeds. Usually farmers who begin as profit-sharers under the system described eventually develop into independent farmers in full ownership.

Men who select land have opportunities of earning money by working for their neighbours at clearing under-





SCRUB ROAD TO LAKE EACHAM.



brush, etc. As soon as they have cleared a patch of their own land they can plant it with maize and potatoes, and may gradually extend operations in dairying or agriculture till the whole of their holdings has been cleared.

The method of clearing the original scrub is by falling it, then allowing the fallen timber to dry after all that is marketable has been removed. The dried wood is burnt during the driest months of the year. Underbrush, should it appear, can easily be removed. If the soil is required for dairying, *paspalum* is planted, and perhaps nowhere does this fine fattening, milk-increasing grass grow to such perfection. Its luxuriance on the Tableland's soil absolutely astonishes visitors who previously were well acquainted with it in New South Wales dairying districts. Successful experiments also have been made with Rhodes grass and *panicum muticum*, but practical opinion generally is in favour of *paspalum*.

New settlers, if they are of truly industrious inclination and good character, can obtain advances from the State Agricultural Bank or local land salesmen.

The average area of the farms is 160 acres. They carry a cow or two "poddies" (dairy calves advancing to maturity) to the acre. Fattening "poddies" for the beef market has become a sure source of income, and some farmers keep special paddocks for that purpose.

Pig-raising and fattening are profitable operations which go hand in hand with dairying.

The whole area produces maize crops of much density and high quality, in fact, its history as a maize-growing locality is much older than its record as a dairying district. The original scrub clearings were made so that maize might be planted, and so crude was the knowledge of the original



agriculturists that they burnt valuable cedars and other marketable timbers without the slightest compunction.

Unfortunately, too, many of the best maize-growing areas were leased to Chinese, and closer settlement by Britishers thus retarded.

In connection with the planting of grass seeds for grazing purposes, it is interesting to note that in a short time the new grass, growing where once was tropical scrub, kills the secondary scrub-growth in its infancy, and takes possession of the soil. Pigs, as well as cattle, will fatten on *paspalum*, and if given a little space for roaming, will require very little styefeeding on butter-milk from the factory, separated milk, or maize.

Early in 1918 a much suggested enterprise was a bacon factory.

The best growing weather at Atherton is that of the regular rainy season—January, February, and March. Then the continuous rain and absence of scorching sun suit delicate seed, and growth is so rapid as to appear simply marvellous.

The dairy stock most favoured are Ayrshires, short-horns, Illawarra breeds, and Holsteins. The State Farm at Tolga latterly has specialised in Jerseys, with a view to proving their special suitability to some phases of Tableland farming.

The quality of the Tableland butter has consistently improved, and visitors to Atherton enthuse concerning its superior grade. There is a pasteurisation plant at the Golden Grove Butter Factory—an addition to the machinery which was made to assure the preservation of fresh quality.

The original scrub timbers include kauri, maple, bean-tree, white beach, pine, and cedar—sure proof this of the



suitability of the soil for producing various crops. All the ordinary tropical fruits grow to perfection, also citrus fruits and the deciduous kinds usually regarded as peculiar to temperate climates.

Lucerne is a safe and easily secured crop.

Rice has been successfully cultivated on some portions of the forest area.

It is no exaggeration to state that the agricultural properties of the soil are much greater and more varied than those of which practical demonstration so far has been given. This is so because the income from fully proven sources is so sure and so sufficient that no one engages in new experiments. For instance, if a man goes to Atherton with nothing but his family, his furniture, and his determination to "make good," he should, in a few years' time, find himself in possession of a farm, an increasing dairy herd, and an income from cream alone of about £30 a month.

The cream, of course, is obtained by separation process, and part of the equipment of every dairy is its "separator," a boon for which the inventive faculty of a Frenchman was responsible.

Most trains stay long enough at Atherton township to permit passengers to go to the nearer hotels or cafés for luncheon. The way from the railway station to one popular hotel passes under a long trellis covered with flowering creepers and beside flowerbeds in which are blossoms in a state of perfection. It affords, too, a study of tropical fruit trees in full bearing, and a kitchen garden in which vegetables are all of first prize quality.

The maize fields which press closely on the edge of the town and a glimpse of dairy herds on the more rural



side of the line are, in conjunction with the super-quality of the garden and orchard products, sufficient in themselves to induce travellers to pause, and make closer study of the district.

The town of Atherton is regarded as the business centre of the Tableland. The Lands Office and other Government offices are there, also business establishments capable of supplying all requirements.

The annual show of the Tableland Agricultural Society usually occurs in October. It is largely attended by visitors from other districts, and much admiration is expressed for the quality of live stock and the dairy and agricultural products.

The town supports two local newspapers.

### **Tinaroo Shire.**

Originally, the Shire of Tinaroo occupied the whole of the Atherton Tableland. Now, as the result of closer settlement and subdivision it represents only half of the original area, the other half to the east and south-eastward being now the Shire of Eacham. In the year 1907, a period before the subdivision of the Shire, the total income of Tinaroo Shire Council derived from the whole of the Atherton Tableland was £1,520, but in less than ten years its total receipts from all sources amounted on an average to £8,121. In 1907, too, the rateable value of the whole of the Tableland was £135,278. To-day the greatly reduced Shire of Tinaroo, with a roughly estimated area of about 270 square miles only, has on its books properties of the improved rateable value of nearly £245,000.

The councillors and officials have many matters to engage their attention, and to make demands on wisdom



and experience. Situated as the shire is, immediately on the main Coastal Dividing Range, it is an area of hill, dale, and stream. Many bridges and culverts are needed. The roads in areas under new development have to be won from the solid jungle, and it can readily be understood that soil of such high agricultural value is not by any means the best for roadmaking. Still, progress keeps up its gallop.

### **Sources of Information.**

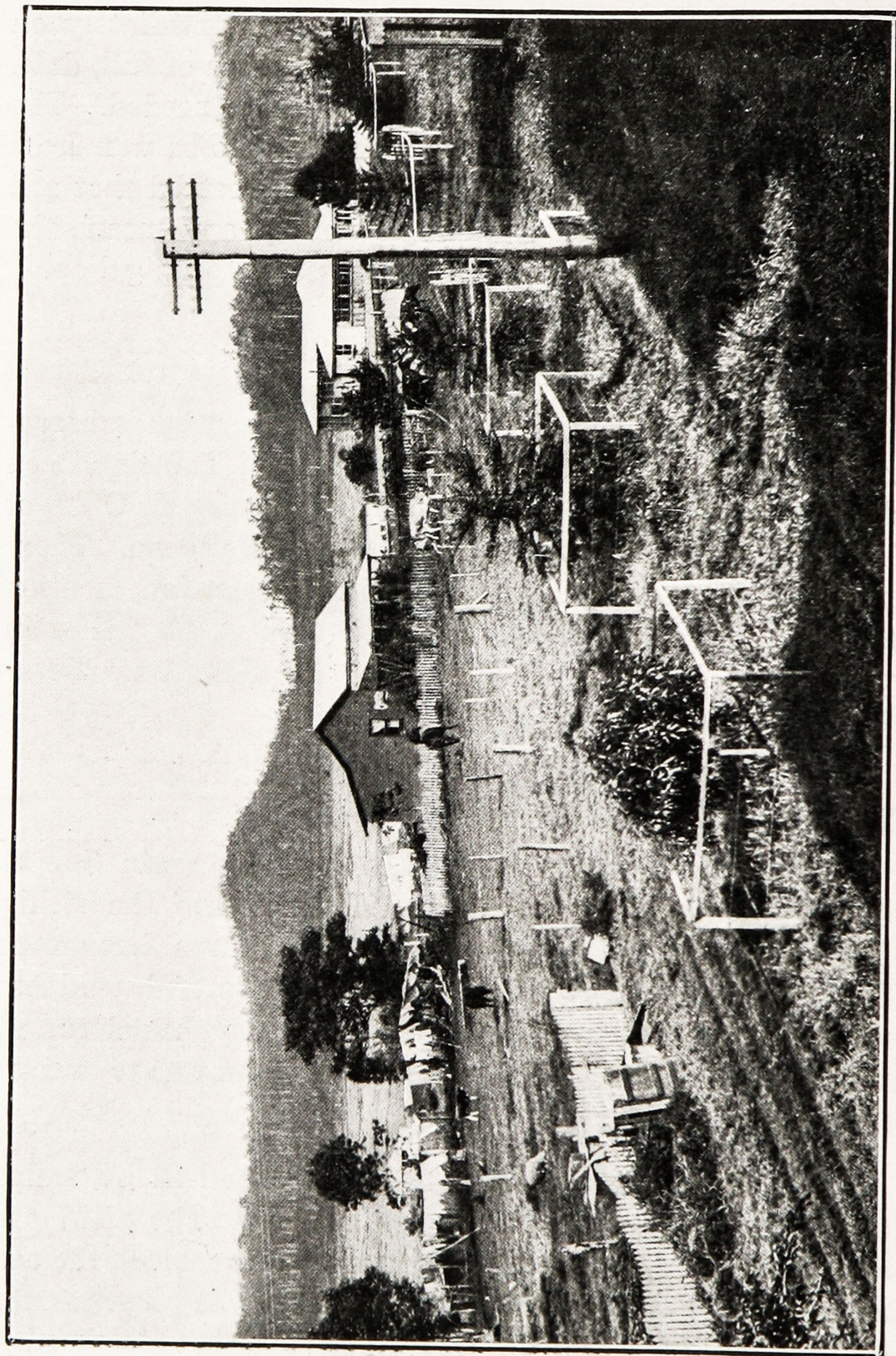
Anyone who may desire further information concerning the undeveloped lands of the Atherton Tableland can obtain it by making inquiries in the district Lands Office at Atherton, or at the head Lands Office in Brisbane. There is still much good scrub land available for selection, mention of which will be made in the particulars which follow in relation to the Eacham Shire and the Johnstone River Branch Railway.

### **The Johnstone River Line.**

This line of railway branches from the main line at Tolga, and has extended beyond Tarzali into the richly timbered and richly watered Tableland area known as Millaa Millaa—a fertile land of waterfalls and wildness which, since access to it has become more easy, has attracted returned soldiers and other men whose desire was to engage in primary industry.

The town of Tolga is partially hemmed in by maize lands, usually in a state of heavy bearing. The yield per acre in comparison to that of some of the most famous maize-growing areas in the Southern States is phenomenal. The soil is so good and the rainfall so sure that the density and quality of the crops show little or no variation.





YUNGABURRA.



Two tons to the acre is an average maize crop in the locality.

The land devoted to dairying comfortably carries two cows to the acre.

There is a State farm at a short distance from Tolga. There experiments are made by experts with a view to arrival at definite conclusions, and also for the purpose of supplying sound advice to farmers and new settlers. Cultivation of the soil, cattle and pig-raising, and model dairying form the chief activities of the officials.

The Barron Valley Farmers' Co-operative Society make Tolga their headquarters, and the Eacham Co-operative Farmers, Limited, also have an establishment there.

### **Yungaburra.**

A famous holiday and week-end resort on the Johnstone River Line is Yungaburra. Between it and Tolga there is typical cleared scrub scenery, and many evidences of fertility. At certain seasons there is a blaze of yellow blossom on each side of the line, and the second scrub growths of dwarf cedar assist picturesqueness.

For the benefit of the uninitiated it may be necessary to explain the meaning or character of the term "second scrub." When primeval jungle or, to use the Australian term, scrub is devastated by axe, saw and fire, the trees that arise and clothe the scene with new life belong to a lineage which previously had either small place there or no place at all. The towering monarchs of the arboreal race have been slain—have died to rise no more; the rich botanical hunting-grounds have been supplanted by beauty more common-place. The old scrub trees which rose in



imposing columns, and without a branch except those interlaced with the tops of other trees, were so high that their blossoms, looked at from below, seemed insignificant, but the falling of a tree sometimes proved that they possessed both beauty and fragrance. On the contrary the secondary scrubs spread their floral and foliage exhibitions that all may see.

At some places near Yungaburra the original scrub remains much as it used to be. The gaps made by the removal of the largest cedars have closed up, and huge trees of other species spread their branches to make a lofty roof. Fine coteries of orchids, cane and flowering creepers forming beauty's ropes, tree ferns, parasitic and ground ferns, arums of several kinds, make a profusion of beauty.

There are many beautiful and valuable timbers in Eacham Shire. Cedar, silky oak, bull oak, maple, bean, crow's foot ash, walnut, white beech, crow's foot elm, all have a natural home there. One giant cedar close to Tula, a station four miles beyond Yungaburra, is a fair representative of the cedar tree as once it so abundantly used to be.

The native fig is plentifully seen in the form of shrubs, vines, and enormous trees with hosts of roots intricately interlaced. The latter variety

“spreads her arms,

Branching so broad and long that on the ground  
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow  
About the mother tree, a pillared shade.”

The fig vine is beautiful, but unkindly. It twines its strong, thick stem round a tree trunk, and finally chokes out the life of the column that gave it support. All the native fig-trees have a profusion of fruit, massed in clusters, which, according to its stage of growth, is green, purple,





FIRST GLIMPSE OF LAKE EACHAM.



or bright red. With its beauty of foliage and fruit, its widely spreading roof and density of shade, the giant fig-tree claims a rightful place to preservation close to streams, and there is, also, an India-rubber producing species worthy of cultivation.

Yungaburra is a pretty and rapidly rising town. Its streets are wide, and planted with double rows of ornamental shade trees. Around and within it are pleasant, grassy hills of low stature. On one such gentle rise the State school stands in a large expanse of playground, with the head teacher's pretty residence, also in a liberal expanse of space, standing alongside.

Windmills among the undulations are graceful as well as utilitarian.

On the outskirts the upright timbers of thinned scrubs rise directly alongside the rich *paspalum* grass which clothes the fully cleared areas.

The Lake Eacham Hotel at Yungaburra is replete with comfort and homeliness. It has wide balconies, cosy lounges, and dining-halls in which generous milk-jugs and cream bowls suggest, as is actually the case, a large, choice dairy herd as part of the establishment's domestic equipment. The proprietors of the hotel also own bakeries, butcheries, farms, and a cattle station, and the word "prime" applies to all their manufactures and products as served at the Lake Eacham Hotel. A gardener is kept to till a vegetable garden, and in the flower garden the primary colours make a brilliant show among the more modest secondary tints. As well as being a place providing for the requirements of a farming population, Yungaburra rightly is a tourist centre, consequently visitors should learn with pleasure that it is capable of supplying such generous



accommodation. A few miles distant from it are the famous and entirely unique Lakes Eacham and Barrine, to which much-travelled tourists award astonished admiration.

There are thriving cheese factories in the neighbourhood of Yungaburra. Extended dairying activities made a necessity for the establishment of a butter factory near the end of the branch railway.

The local bacon in its firmness and flavour gives more than a hint of the final fattening of the porkers on maize.

At Peterson's Crossing, which is reached by a short walk from Yungaburra, there is a pretty stream, on the banks of which grow some fine many-columned fig-trees of the giant species previously described.

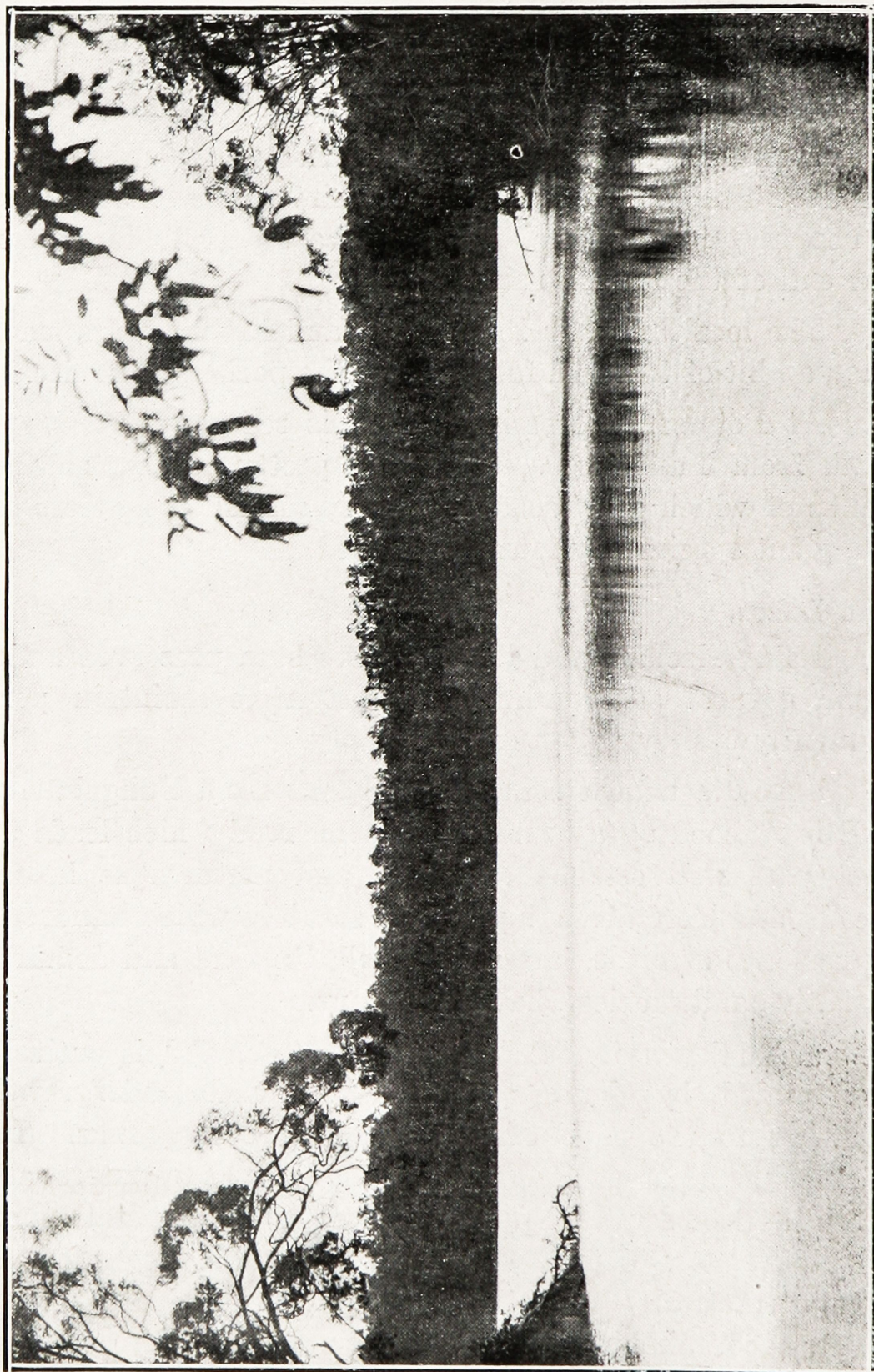
### **The Lakes.**

Lakes Eacham and Barrine have been preserved amid their natural surroundings the better to maintain permanently their uniqueness and beauty.

Lake Eacham is four miles distant from Yungaburra, and is reached by a beautiful driving road which leads at first past well established farms and picturesque homesteads, and later through primeval scrub in which hundreds of varieties of birds, large and small, brilliant and demure, talkative and musical, have sanctuary.

The lake is almost circular in shape, and is entirely surrounded by dense scrub timbers and undergrowth growing to the edge of its abruptly rising banks. Its surface is aqua-marine in colouring, but its waters are fresh and absolutely pure. They have been fathomed in places to a depth of 484 feet, but are regarded as being practically unfathomable at their deepest. That they are contained within a crater is a scientifically accepted fact; that they have subterranean connection with the





LAKE EACHAM.



waters of Lake Barrine, which is miles away, is believed, but less scientifically and with less certainty.

The wild nomadic race which originally roamed the rich tableland had a superstitious dread of the lakes, and of Lake Eacham in particular. Even the civilised blacks of the present period superstitiously dread Eacham, and cannot be tempted by the offer of any reward to enter its waters. Those waters are entirely free of weeds and lily growths. No fish swim in them, no birds rest on them. They are, in a sense, the waters of a dead lake, but in their perfect freshness they are totally unlike dead lakes elsewhere.

Eacham is 130 acres in extent; Barrine, out of which flows Barrine Creek, covers a space of 256 acres.

No matter how heavy are the rains, or how extended the rainy season, Eacham never overflows, and, indeed, gives little indication of having risen above its normal level. But, oddly enough, campers there in fine weather have measured a regular daily rise and fall of four inches in its surface, and, although the freshness of the water remains unimpaired, it is suggested that the lake must be in some peculiar, unseen way subject to tidal influence. A similar rise and fall is noticed in Barrine.

The aspect of both lakes is entirely beautiful, and the forethought which has preserved intact all their natural surroundings has assured that their beauty shall remain. The scrub road to the lakes enables visitors to gain very close acquaintanceship with the characteristic plants of tropical Australia; there growing under natural conditions in that free and unchecked luxuriance which will endure no gardener's hand.

The cleared grassy space at the end of the drive to





LAKE EACHAM HOTEL, YUNGABURRA.



Lake Eacham is an ideal spot for picnics. A small boat is kept on each lake, and swimmers find a peculiar kind of refreshment and exhilaration after bathing in the lake's waters.

Whether or not the craters were hollowed at the time that Nature ordained the richness of the surrounding volcanic soil remains one of Nature's secrets. There are other large craters in the Tableland neighbourhood, but they are empty, and visibly stony, except where timbers have clothed their sides.

So far science has given no decided opinion as to the age of the lakes, though many professional and amateur geologists have visited them. Proud as science is, Nature still baulks her in rare places.

“ Knowledge is proud that it has learned so much,  
Wisdom is humble that it knows no more.”

Before a visit to Yungaburra is concluded, a closer acquaintance with the scrub, which is of a different character to that at Kuranda, should be gained, with, of course, a careful avoidance of nettle-trees and a careful admiration of the handsome but tenacious lawyer-cane.

The interesting phalanges of crowfoot elm, the colonising habit of banyans soon reveal themselves.

Chillies, passion-fruit, tomatoes, cape gooseberries, paw-paws, and a species of raspberry grow wild on the borders and wherever openings have been made, and have added much variety to the birds' daily bill of fare.

### **The Johnstone River Line continued.**

Added to its current history in agriculture and dairying, the area served by the Johnstone River Railway has splashed sparsely over it a little of the glamour which invariably attaches to metalliferous regions. A few miles



from Yungaburra, at Mount Mascot, there is a gold mine. Near Peeramun, a village further along the line, there have been discoveries of wolfram. But the industrial evidences beside the route are mainly and richly of the soil rather than of the mine. Timber mills, dairy herds, cultivated fields, and cream cans testify in relation to the predominant sources of wealth. And the reflection that this is merely a portion of the Atherton Tableland's 3,000 square miles of rich deep soil is inspiring.

The elevation of the Tableland averages 2,400 feet, and from the fact of its early morning and evening crispness of atmosphere it produces fruit and crops which are quite outside the tropical category. And side by side with such fruit and crops grow, in their highest form of culture, fruit and crops that are essentially and exclusively tropical.

Paspalum, Rhodes grass, and clover clothe the cleared areas on which well-bred cattle graze.

At Kureen a visit to the timber mill induces in the "old hands" a spirit of loquacity. They tell of the years of crude knowledge, when bush houses were built of timbers beautifully grained and suitable for the cabinet-makers, and silky oak was used for fences and burnt for firewood.

At Malanda, a rising business centre, one cattleman makes a specialty of shorthorns—magnificent animals which have won hundreds of prize ribbons.

The grass grows so luxuriantly by the lines of the railway that a few days of unimpeded growth in the rainy season will cause obstruction sufficient to distress a railway engine, or even to hold up a train.

Beyond Malanda there is more of decision in the character of the hills, but the way is still by rich volcanic soil. It is noticeable that the soft soil of the cuttings is held



together by *Panicum muticum*, one of the imported grasses, which should be of some service in ordinary road-making.

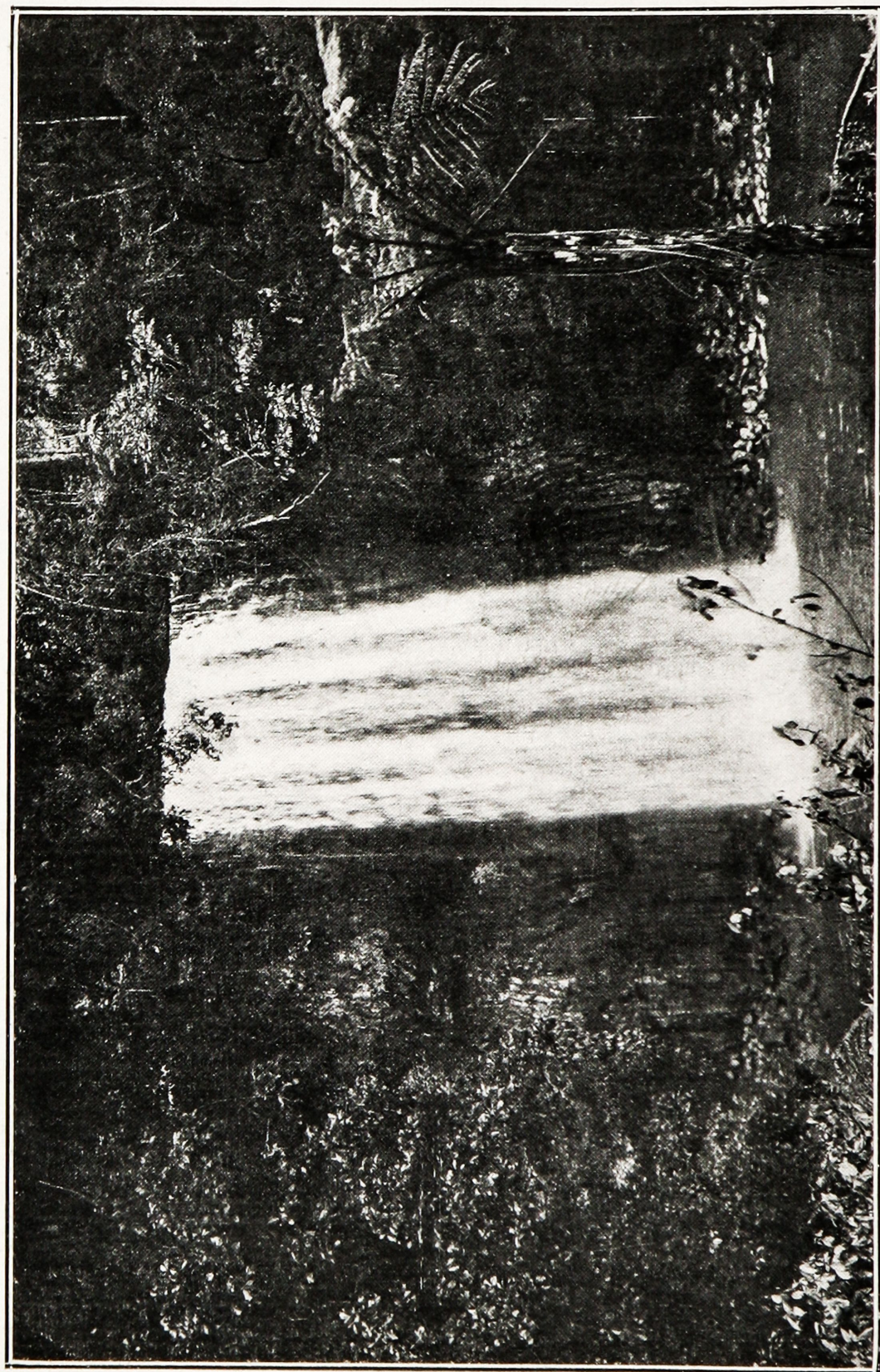
Tarzali, a new township on this line, very soon became a centre of rural industry. Beyond it railway extension stretches out to the Millaa Millaa and Beatrice River country, some of which was surveyed specially with a view to forming a soldiers' farm settlement. There is magnificent scenery within the area, which is abundantly watered, and which contains some picturesque waterfalls.

The energy and perseverance of some of the first settlers in this locality was evidenced by the manner in which they, nothing daunted, conveyed their cream by pack-horse when the rough wheel tracks to their farms became impassable as the result of continuously wet weather. The establishment of more butter factories and the advance of the branch railways should ensure a much less arduous future for new selectors.

Millaa Millaa has long been famous for the enormous girth of its timbers. From some of the pine logs as much as 14,000 feet of the best timber has been obtained. The girth and height of cedars grown in this corner of the Tableland may be judged by one preserved as a feature of the landscape, close to the railway line, for which £365 was offered as it stood.

The completion of the railway to Millaa Millaa will bring the line to a point at which it will be only a few miles distant from the present terminus of the Cairns Railway at Ravenshoe. Ultimately, no doubt, all the nearer railways will be linked up, greatly to the advantage of closer settlement and production.





MILLAA MILLAA FALLS.



### Tableland Production Epitomised.

Before carrying these particulars to a stage at which they do not specifically apply to the area roughly included within the Atherton Tableland, a few more facts may be epitomised usefully.

The driest season of the year there is from August to November; the wettest from January to March. In the rainy season heavy stocking is required to keep down the grass, and it is the special time for fattening the well-developed "poddies," whose ultimate destination is the beef market. The Illawarra breed is most in favour with the farmers, because it produces beefers as well as milkers.

Almost every farm has its own running stream.

The average annual rainfall is nearly 100 inches. The highest summer temperature is 82 degrees, but that degree of heat seldom is experienced.

Naturally, the value of land has increased under closer settlement, but there remains unimproved land quite as rich in soil and timbers as that which now bears a closely settled and prosperous population.

The nearness of the area to cataracts of such tremendous force as that of the Tully Falls suggests that in the not distant future an extensive electrification scheme may be applied in connection with transport facilities, machinery, and illumination.

Purcell's Farm, near Atherton township, has been cultivated for nearly a quarter of a century, yet its soil does not seem to have lost a fraction of its richness. Usually the grass crop, whether it be *paspalum*, *Rhodes*, or *Panicum muticum*, suffices, and the original experiments in the cultivation of such fodder crops as lucerne, field peas,



Mauritius beans, and cow-cane have been largely discontinued for the reason that they were unnecessary.

Such a soil, scene, and climate near a large centre of population would be a Paradise for nurserymen and market gardeners. Mammoth vegetables grow with very little attention; stalks of salvia and dahlias spring up to a height of more than six feet of full and magnificent bloom.

Life "on the land" is made ideal by such natural characteristics and improved conditions as those existent on the Atherton Tableland, and it is confidently expected that the next decade will see a very large increase in its population and production.

It is noticeable that most of the well-established farmers in the locality originally came from dairying districts of New South Wales, and all are so well content with their income and surroundings that they have determined to make North Queensland their permanent abiding-place.

### **On to Herberton.**

Shortly after leaving Atherton the main Cairns Railway passes on over very steeply rising ground to Herberton, a famous tin and copper mining town. What the route loses in fertility is atoned for by the totally different character of the scenery, which is rugged but still grassy. The rocks in the cuttings indicate metalliferousness.

As the ranges are climbed Atherton township and the rich tableland can be gazed down upon in all their picturesqueness.

The line is zig-zag and overlooks the tops of tall forests.

At one stage the train pauses directly beside a waterfall, and the cool breath of the spray affects the atmosphere.





STONEY CREEK FALLS, CAIRNS RAILWAY.



Passengers enjoy the exquisite coolness while the boiler receives its necessary water supply. There are some charming glimpses of scenery.

Near Herberton the Wild River comes into view. This stream passes alongside the town, and adds much to the picturesqueness of the site. It usually is a clear, shallow stream, running talkatively, but at times it develops into a roaring torrent. A weir associated with the town water supply is one of its artificial features. It has a clean sandy bed, and its clear pools are very inviting. The altitude of Herberton is nearly 3,000 feet, and near to it are settled places which have an altitude of nearly 4,000 feet.

The climate is noted for its invigorating quality. The young people are rosy-cheeked; the old full of vigorous enjoyment of life.

Herberton has become a favourite locality for students, and boarding-schools are among its special features. The site really consists of a series of hills forming part of a range. Pretty creeks run through it to join the river, and to add the colour of their streamside foliage.

A site so elevated, so perfectly drained, and ordinarily so crisp in its atmosphere seems specially designed by Nature for sanatoria purposes.

The Department of Public Instruction has recognised the suitability of the climate for the purposes of students by establishing a high school there.

The town has a weekly paper, a school of arts, and most of the modern requirements of an intelligent population. Some day, no doubt, it will be brilliantly illuminated by electric power obtained from the waterfall region.



## History of the Field.

The history of the Herberton District as a mining field began in 1880, when the first notice was written of the lease of the freehold for tin, according to the provisions of the Mining Act then in existence. The rush to the field set in in 1883, and was at its highest during the succeeding seven years. There was then no railway over the Coastal Range, and the tin was despatched to Port Douglas by a rough bush track, as that port was more readily accessible than Cairns. Hundreds of horses were used to carry the packs, and the owners of the pack teams found their occupation very profitable. In a few years' time the constant passage of the packhorses formed a good dray road to Port Douglas. The road was wildly beautiful, and the life of the carriers was not without adventure.

At the date at which these particulars were compiled, Mr. John Newell, one of the adventurous prospectors interested in the first mining lease, was still residing in Herberton, and was actively engaged in the management of several business concerns.

Although so many years have elapsed since tin-mining operations began in Herberton, they still are profitable, but the main output of metal is represented by copper.

In a recent year the value of tin discovered in the mining district under the charge of the Warden at Herberton was £85,364.

Other metals plentifully discovered in the locality are silver and lead.

Some of the most important copper mines are situated on the outskirts of the town, and can be reached within the compass of a short walk.

Herberton, though its "roaring" days are over, still is



a brisk business town, but the miners of to-day mostly are quietly disposed persons mindful of their homes and families, and preferably located permanently rather than nomadically.

Official history shows that alluvial tin was first worked behind the Coast Range, in the early part of 1880, on Prospector's Gully, near the present town of Herberton. The first lode—the "Gully" lode of the first Great Northern Freehold—was found a little higher up the same gully a few months afterwards. Previously to this stream tin had been worked in Tinaroo Creek, east of the Coast Range, but, apparently, it was not till the opening of the ports of Cairns and Port Douglas in 1879 that much attention was paid to the mineral deposits west of the range, though they had been reported by a pioneer named Mulligan in 1874. In the latter end of 1879, Squatter John Atherton, who had a station on the Barron, took up John Newell and several others from Tinaroo (about 30 miles off) to the heads of the Wild River. Atherton, who knew very little about metals, had found Newell and his fellow-prospectors working stream tin at Tinaroo, and had told them that if they were looking for that kind of deposit, he could take them to a place where there was much more of it. At Wild River the party found stream tin in payable quantities. Four months later William Jack and party explored the neighbourhood of Prospector's Gully, and were rewarded by the discovery of the Great Northern lode. Other lodes were quickly found, and taken up by the miners who shortly reached the ground. Very soon as many as 109 claims were being worked. Crushing began in 1883, and in the first year of crushing operations 12,405 tons of stone were treated for a return of 2,646 tons of black tin.

In 1885 the battery at Irvinebank commenced crush-



ing, chiefly on ore from the Great Southern Mine. Irvinebank quickly became an important centre, and has remained so ever since.

Naturally, the tin-mining industry has had its vicissitudes. For a number of years the ruling price of tin was so low that it did not pay to work any but surface deposits. Still, new lodes were opened, and in 1898 a sudden increase in the value of tin led to a marked revival of interest in the field. Abandoned mines were reworked by newly-formed companies, and some of the batteries then erected have been working with fair regularity ever since.

### **Irvinebank and other Operations.**

Irvinebank is 12 miles distant from Herberton on the south-western side, and is approached from there by a coach road abounding in scenic charm. Among the many busy mining companies of the Herberton Mineral Field the Irvinebank Mining Company has been most vigorous and consistent.

The Stannary Hills Company, which secured an abandoned mine at Eureka Creek, and worked with such success that it acquired railway connection, also has earned the reward of courage and perseverance.

But where so many rich mines have constantly been worked it seems invidious to particularise. The small size of the great majority of the lodes combined with their richness has made them peculiarly adapted to return good profits to small parties of working miners.

There is a considerable quantity of diversity in the character of tin-bearing rock. That close to Herberton is a normal biotite granite traversed by numerous dykes of a pinkish or whitish elvan.





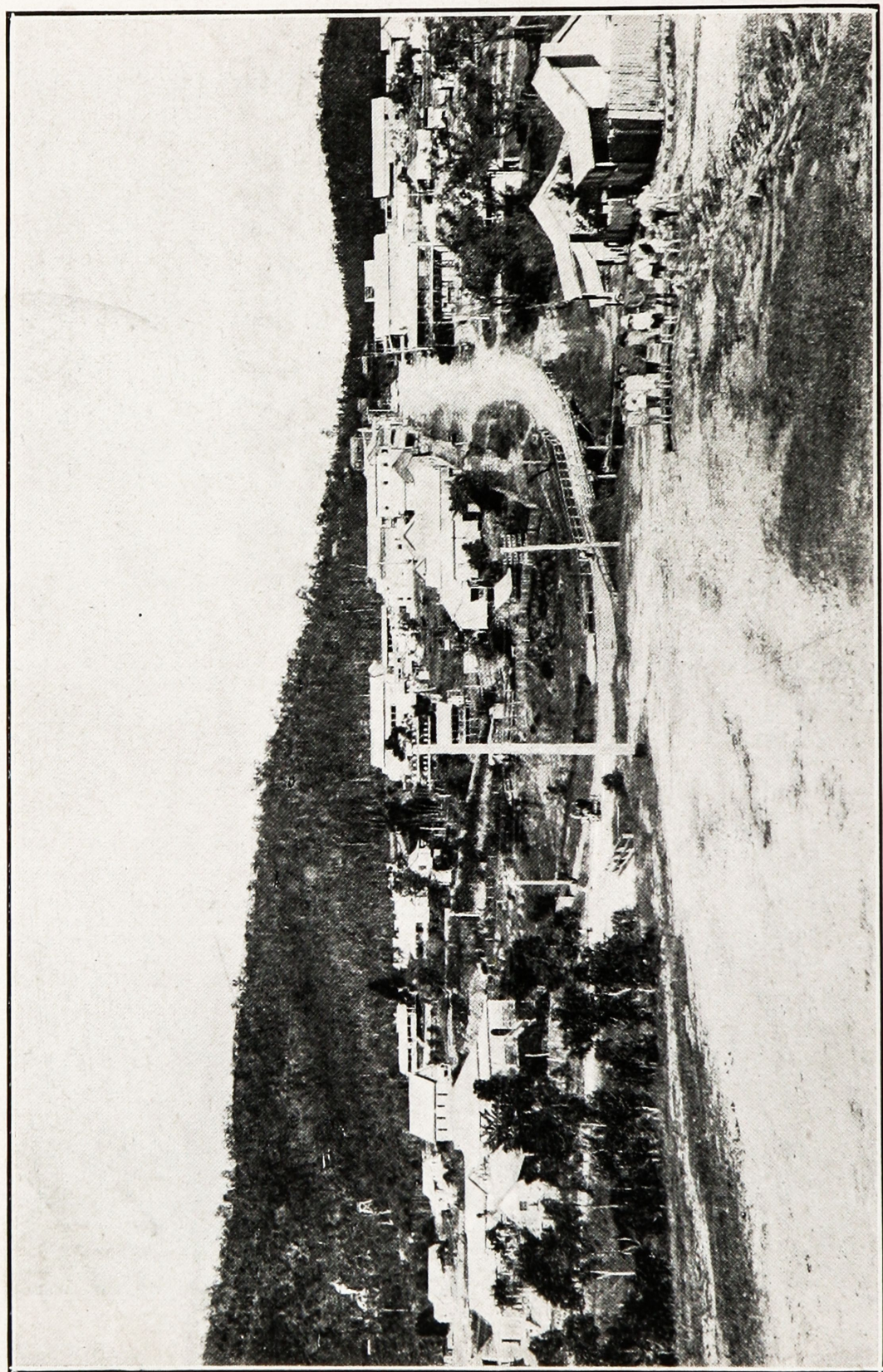
BARRON FALLS FROM THE BOTTOM; HALF FLOOD.





DAM AND ORE TREATMENT WORKS, IRVINEBANK.





HERBERTON.



In the still rougher country about Irvinebank the geological formation among which tin lodes appear is, according to technical description, a series of folded grey-wackes, quartzites, and slates. The lode material is generally a fine-grained green chloritic rock, which weathers to a rusty red on the surface, and this rusty redness, which to the uninitiated merely seems striking and a picturesque addition to Nature's coloration, is, to the prospector, indication of the existence of a lode. Under the microscope it reveals its richness—tin, magnetite, bismuth sulphide, galena, and copper pyrites most probably being contained within it.

Other ore deposits occur in a series of hardened sandstones and mudstones; others again in quartz and grey schists.

### **Other Metals.**

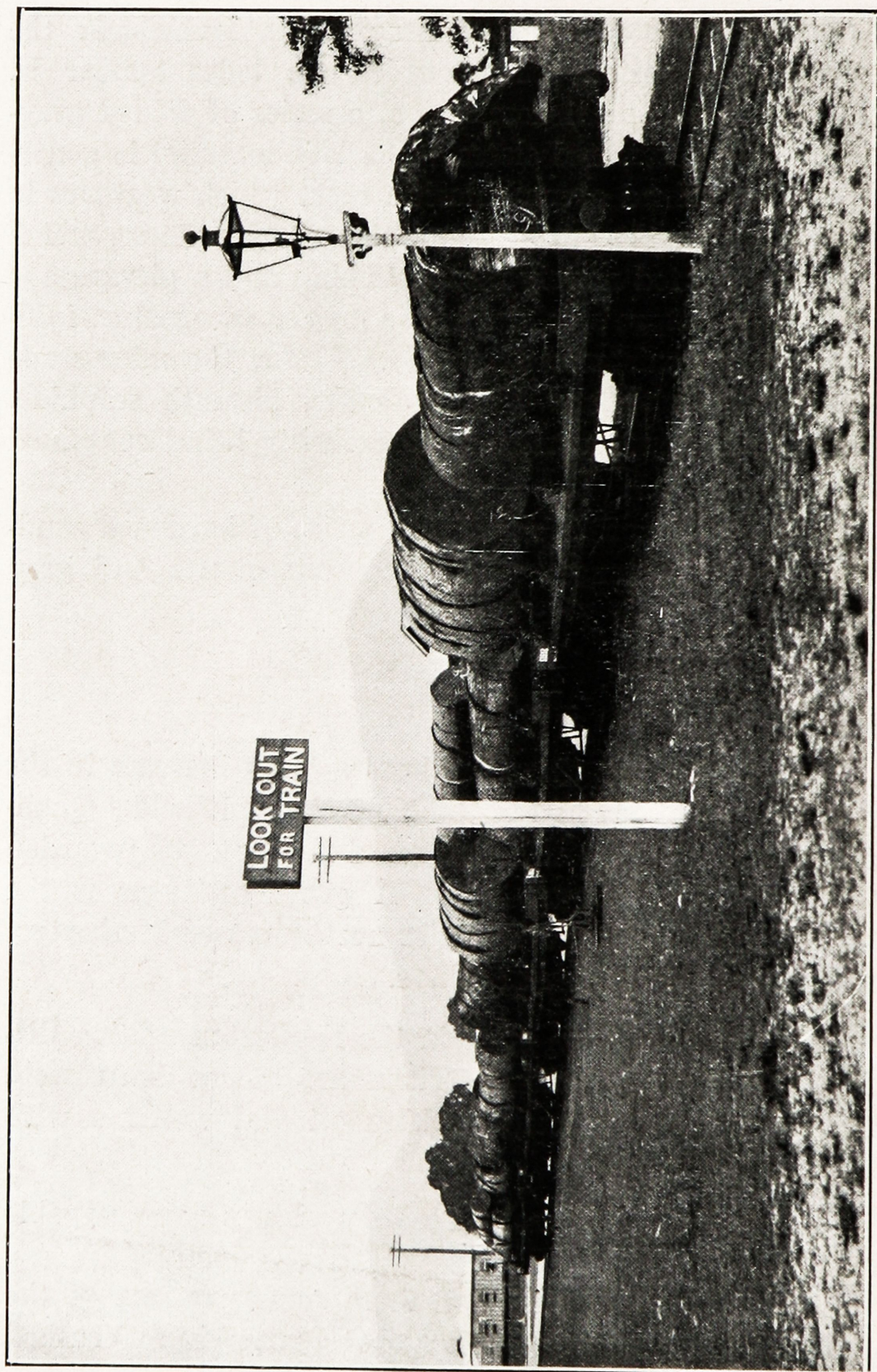
In recent years there has been a large increase in the copper output of Herberton Gold and Mineral Field. Quantities of rich copper were discovered in what was regarded as a worked-out copper belt. A great producer is the Empress Mine, situated  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Herberton, and there are a number of others.

The chief wolfram mine in the Herberton mining district is at Mount Carbine. There are others doing well, also a number of miners working alluvial wolfram with satisfactory results.

Silver, lead, and molybdenite workings raise payable ore.

Alluvial gold is still won from some portions of the field, and there are also fair gold returns from crushed ore.





BIG TIMBER FREIGHT, FROM RAVENSHOE.



The extent of the Herberton Gold and Mineral Field is 6,545 square miles, but most of the particulars here supplied apply to localities not far removed from the town of Herberton, which is the headquarters of the mining warden, mining inspectors, &c.

The soil of the Herberton Range is well suited for orchards. Apples, pears, and other fruits usually associated with non-tropical climates take rather kindly to the high altitude. No attempt other than that of Nature has been made to grass any portion of the area, but it is a theory usually accepted that where blady grass flourishes other grass will grow too. Herberton, with its tonic air, its rich present and certain future, seems to have permanently a prominent place in Queensland's progress.

### **Nature's Healing.**

North Queenslanders can find on the eucalyptus-clothed heights at Herberton a thoroughly revivifying atmosphere. At Watsonville, which is only a few miles away, the range rises still higher, and one portion of it, Mount Stewart's Head, reaches a height of 4,400 feet above the sea.

In other countries of the world, Australia's eucalyptus trees are cultivated, because it scientifically is believed that they dry the soil, and render the air wholesome. Their hygienic value in such a region as that of the Herberton Range is greatly intensified. Dr. Nature has often performed fine cures at Herberton, and according to his usual habit as a skilled practitioner, he does not present any bills.

### **Ravenshoe.**

The railway extends beyond Herberton into the richly-timbered lands of Ravenshoe. Those lands, too, are rich in





MILLSTREAM FALLS.



streams and waterfalls. They are both a botanist's delight and an artist's joy. The Millstream and Tully Rivers, both of which are close to the end of the railway, have, as well as their much-photographed main falls, a series of smaller falls very picturesque in character.

### **The Millstream Falls.**

The Millstream Falls are the widest in Australia, and their surrounding topography is of a character to permit of their being viewed at very close quarters.

### **The Tully Falls.**

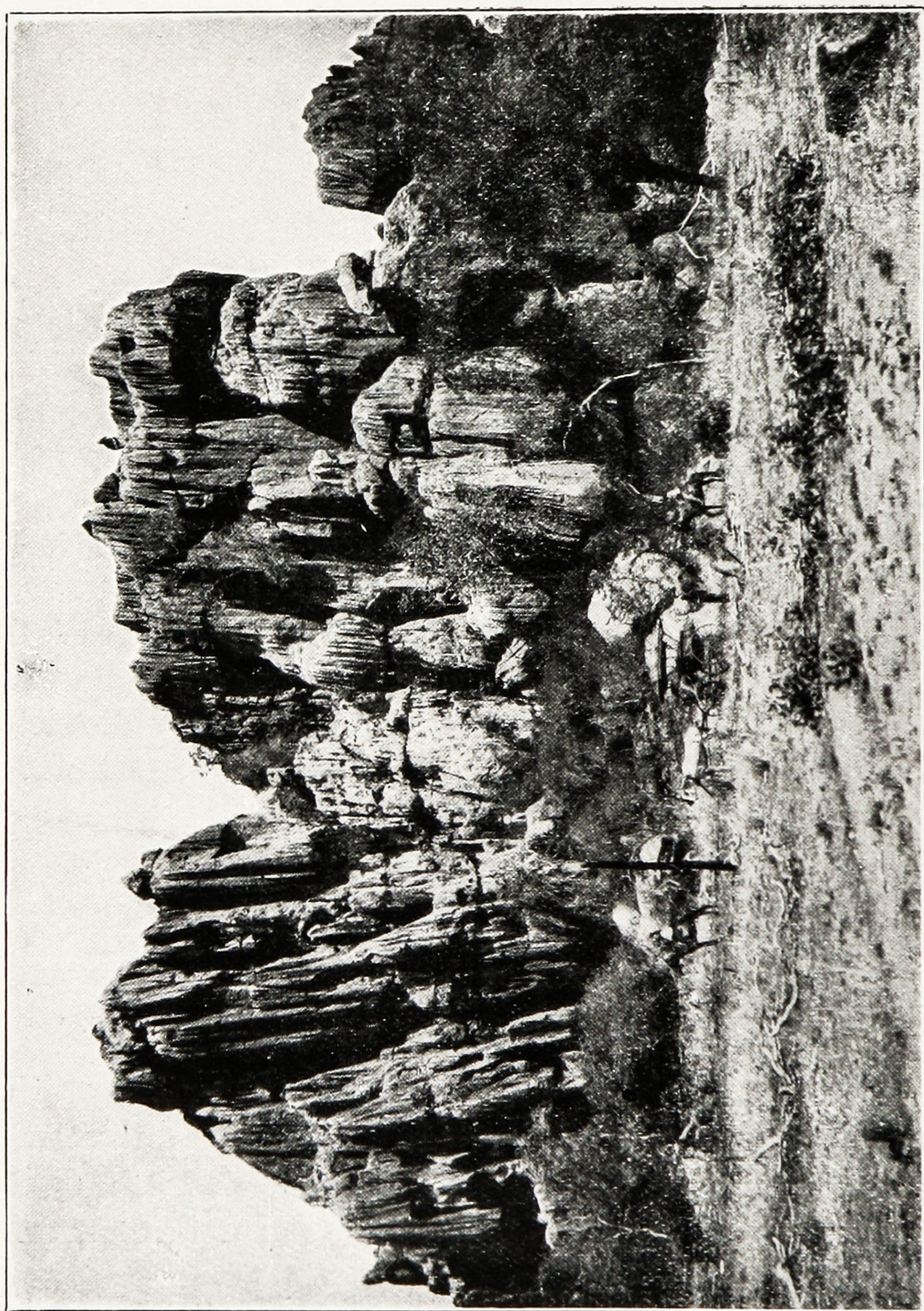
The Tully Falls, which are further away, are deeper and finer even than the Barron Falls. At present they are surrounded by absolute wildness, but can be reached on horseback. Their water power is so enormous that it could be applied to the electrification of the whole district, and it would be invaluable as a means of driving manufacturers' machinery.

### **Other Features.**

Riding parties can be arranged in Ravenshoe, and kangaroo hunting is a pastime of the more open valleys.

In the great timber belt from which so much wealth in wood has been won, some of the noblest trees still stand in their stately grandeur of trunk and crown. The largest kauri pines in the Southern Hemisphere are in these scrubs. Their girth is so great that when quoted it seems almost fabulous. On the road to Evelyn—a great pastoral tableland in the forest area—there is a coach drive through the centre of an old and hollow pine.





EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE MAIN CHILLAGOE CAVE.



In the timber forest reserves, cedar, maple, white beech, kauri, &c., may be seen in company with huge parasitic ferns.

Large quantities of valuable timber are trucked in crude form from Ravenshoe Railway Station, and in addition many logs are sawn at local mills.

The land has high agricultural value, and as it is cleared it is utilised for mixed farming. Fruit grows finely, and flower gardens are lovely beyond description.

On the Evelyn Tableland there is excellent soil, which assuredly eventually will come under the transforming influence of a closely settled population.

A few miles from Ravenshoe are hot springs, which have not yet been widely tested, but which are believed to have much curative value.

It may truly be said that this exceedingly rich and beautiful district still is almost wholly undeveloped. What a field for young men of industrious disposition and home-making inclinations!

### **The Chillagoe Line.**

The branch railway, which leaves Mareeba and passes westward through a drier area than any with which these pages hitherto have been associated, is not classed as a scenic route, yet it has, for a considerable portion of its way, spectacular interest which is entirely its own. It was built, with the consent of Parliament, and under certain conditions of agreement, by the Chillagoe Railway and Mining Company for the purpose of conveying ore and metals, and with a view to providing for the transport of general goods and passengers. For many years it had a very busy career,





A REACH OF THE BARRON.



and now that new and rich mining interests have developed in areas which it serves, it may yet eclipse its previous record in usefulness.

Very soon after leaving Mareeba a marked difference is noted in the character of the country.

Isolated hills of rugged character assert a changed topography.

Granite cliffs stare boldly.

A small stream is busy with its miniature leaps.

Granite boulders tell of tumultuous displacement in ages long ago.

On the left there is a long blue line of mountains.

Wild flowers among the rocks and grass have colour and significance.

In some of the rocky cuttings there are gleams as of pyrites.

In the rainy season low-lying places become lagoons, haunted by wild fowl.

Where there are creeks they are oak-lined, and have nothing of the stream-side tangle of vegetation usually so noticeable in North Queensland.

Some streams perhaps will run blood-red, as the result of miners sluicing in a red soil area.

The clean white bark of the gum trees gives them at first glance the appearance of dead timber.

Hard, high antheaps, conical and round, become a frequent feature.

The Walsh River is crossed, and later its course is watched from high above as the line zigzags over the Range.

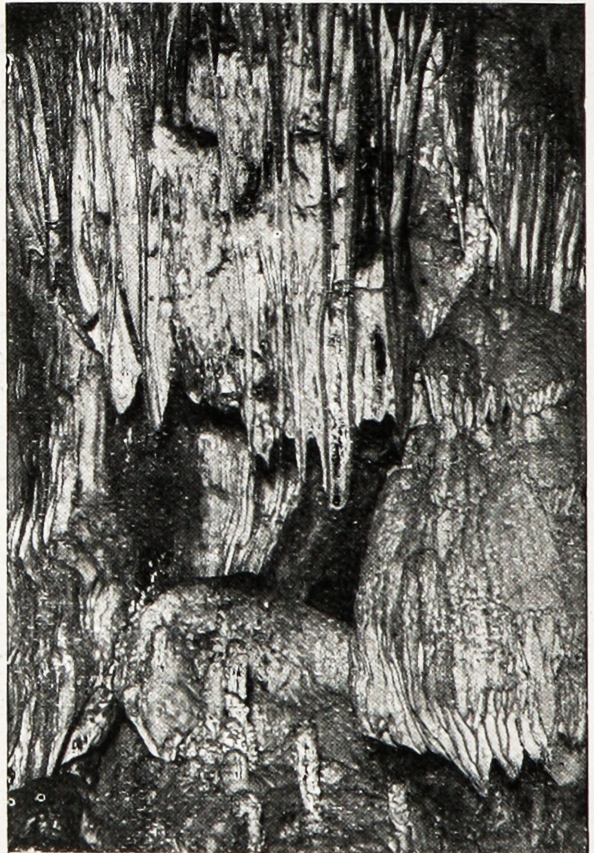




LIMESTONE CAVES,  
CHILLAGOE AND MUNGANA.



There are several caves in the vicinity of Chillagoe, the principal being about three miles distant. Intending visitors should make their arrangements for guide conveyance with the caretaker in Chillagoe.



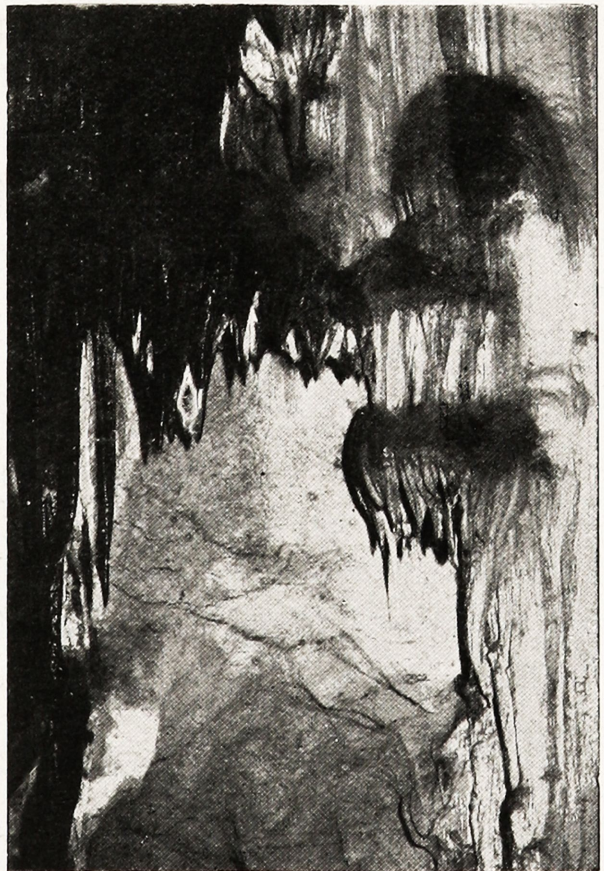




CHILLAGOE AND MUNGANA  
CAVES.



The most beautiful of the Mungana Caves is only about half a mile from the latter township, and is a wonderfully beautiful sight, the stalagmites and stalactytes being perfectly preserved. The Organ Cave is about three miles on the Chillagoe side of Mungana.





As the town of Chillagoe is neared very striking limestone formations are seen. They are of a character totally unlike any others in the continent. One of them, "The Castle," entirely deserves its name from the fact of its resemblance to a huge castle of ancient architecture. If seen for the first time by moonlight, the illusion is complete, but when seen by daylight the seeming battlemented castle is shown to have a trimming of bottle-trees.

The terminus of the line is at Redcap, beyond the mining town of Mungana.

There are several important branch lines, owned by the State, attached to the Chillagoe Railway. At Dimbulah a railway branches off to Mount Mulligan, an important coalmining centre.

Boonmoo is the next junction station. From there a train goes to Stannary Hills and Irvinebank.

The Mount Garnet Railway branches off at Lappa Junction, and from Alma-Den a long line runs, first south-west and then due west, to Forsayth, which formerly was known as Charlestown.

All of these branches pass through metalliferous areas in which are many mines.

### **Some of the Mines.**

Expert geological reports on Mount Mulligan have stated that the coal of that mine is suitable for making coke—a very useful carboniferous quality in an area where there are many smelters. It has also been stated that the supply of Mount Mulligan coal is practically inexhaustible.

Around Boonmoo are copper mines.

At Mount Garnet, which is close to Mount Cardwell,



another mining field in the Great Dividing Range, an area originally worked for copper and silver is now producing zinc.

At Wolfram Camp—a prosperous field reached by coach from the Dimbulah-Mulligan line—the wealth of mineral seems unlimited, and many miners are employed.

One of the most notable deposits of ironstone in Australia is at Mount Lucy, which is connected with the branch railway running out from Alma-Den.

Mount Surprise, on the same line, is famous for its wonderful richness in molybdenite.

Mount Molloy produces copper; Etheridge is a gold-field, and so on. Whole pages might be filled with statements of the names and characteristic products of the many mining areas in the Chillagoe Gold and Mineral Field, which has an area of 9,740 miles.

In the annual report presented by the Lands Department in relation to this district, statistics of its wealth in copper, silver lead, gold, tin, antimony, wolfram, bismuth, molybdenite, galena, &c., are importantly included. From the Mitchell River, its northern boundary, to the Einasleigh River, which bounds it on the south, and from its eastern to its western boundary, it is metalliferous, multi-metalliferous, if such a term may with lexicographic permission be applied.

The State has given valuable assistance to the mining industry by the establishment of a battery at Bamford, close to Chillagoe line, for the treatment of wolfram and molybdenite ores.

For fuller information in regard to this—one of the



largest and most varied mineral districts in the world—readers should consult the reports annually presented to Parliament.

At the town of Chillagoe the smelting industry has declined from its former proportions; but Chillagoe town and the great Chillagoe Gold and Mineral Field are totally different significations, in regard to which those Australians who aspire to know their country well should suffer no confusion.

### **Chillagoe's Scenic Attractions.**

Though the great chimneys of the great smelting works which lie just across stream from Chillagoe town have lost most of their smoky volume as the result of reduced operations by the Chillagoe Railway and Mines, Limited, Chillagoe town has unique and striking characteristics which always should assure for it interest of an unusual character. The Chillagoe Railway and smelters have since been purchased by the Queensland Government, and new mining development is reported. Its site is level except for the ancient limestone formations which are dotted plentifully in and around about it. Most wonderful shapes these are—rising ruggedly and suddenly, and fashioned as though planned according to the artistic ideas of some great architect of past ages. Of them science somewhat vaguely has said that they once formed part of an ocean-swept coral reef, or were boundaries of the ocean. This much at least science can definitely say, that among the ancient natural structures of our very ancient continent these are among the most ancient.

“There rolled the deep where grows the tree,” perhaps, and the weather-stained limestone crags of Chillagoe, perhaps, once knew well the ocean's restless beat



on some old shore from which the tide retreated before the dawn of history in any of the continents.

A swiftly running and ever-constant stream, Chillagoe Creek, divides the town, and roars musically over its rocky bed. Great trees grow beside its banks.

At all times the aspect of Chillagoe is picturesque. When rain is plentiful it is beautiful. Then tall grass clothes the level sweeps, there is bloom on the trees which have foothold on the ruggedly abrupt limestone hills; the river tumbles and foams, the clean, winding roads fit nicely into the natural scheme. The acute inaccessible spires of castle-like formations, and the broad domes of some which appear not unlike Gothic cathedrals with ruined pinnacles, add a touch of Old-World architectural grandeur—a touch fictitious, yet paradoxically natural. Seamed and furrowed rocks rise in seeming array of battlement, and sheer escarpments suggest defiance to enemies before the days of long-range cannon.

That wonderful hill of rock, “The Castle,” which has already been mentioned, is only one of many equally interesting structures. Valuable minerals have been found in some of the limestone hills. Others have been turned out of Nature’s workshop as the covering of secret and very beautiful caves.

### **General Items.**

Chillagoe’s elevation, its broad areas and clear-dry air, entirely free from mugginess at all times, invest it with qualities which make for health and longevity. Its statistics of infantile mortality are said to be among the lowest in the world. There is a fine hospital on a high site to which patients come from considerable distances.



At the State school there is a small, but comprehensive, mineral museum.

The Mining Warden of Chillagoe Gold and Mineral Field has offices in Chillagoe town, which is also the business centre of the Chillagoe Railway.

At the smelting works an enormous accumulation of slag tells of the extent of the smelting operations of the Chillagoe Company.

There are some cattle stations close at hand, also dairying operations which furnish the milk supply, but generally speaking mining ventures have supplied both the district's activities and its revenue.

### **The Caves of Chillagoe.**

Wherever they appear caves of large extent and stalactitic and stalagmitic formation create wonder and awe among thoughtful people and fear among those who are uncivilised. Old aborigines who have remembered tribal traditions have told that the singular shapes of the Chillagoe "castles" invested them with superstitious dread, and that although it was believed by the blacks that some of them were vastly hollow, dread of what they might contain prevented any attempts to tap them. The first of the Chillagoe caves to be discovered by white men is that nearest to Chillagoe town. There are others equally as beautiful, as the Mungana, Piano, and Organ Caves, and it is believed that there are also many other caves in the locality awaiting exploration.

The most important of the better known caves is three miles from the town of Chillagoe, and is reached by a pleasant driving road. Its outward appearance is ruggedly picturesque. Round about its base trees and shrubs grow



thickly. Another plentiful botanical feature associated with it is a very beautiful species of white lily. These lilies crowd about the entrance to the dark and mysterious interior.

In those subterranean chambers and ante-chambers Nature has been at work for countless ages, but, unlike most of the great caves of other countries, the caves of the Chillagoe district do not appear to have been used either for habitation, refuge, or burial by human beings, or even as a refuge for wild animals. Science has declared the vast antiquity of their deposits, and reverent protectorship should ensure the preservation of those marvels which natural process through countless ages has made.

A century is hardly a day's life in the existence of a limestone cave of this character. It is known that stalagmites and stalactites grow in some caves at the rate of only a minute fraction of an inch per annum, consequently a stupendous period of time is necessary to the completion of a foot of either formation. Yet it has happened that caves have been visited by curiosity-mongers so ignorant, or so wilfully destructive, that with a few blows of a hammer they have broken off formations which Nature had produced through the processes of thousands of years.

Most persons know that stalactites are formed from water percolating through rocks and the association of such percolations with bicarbonate of lime. If a line of drops persistently falls from the same place to the floor of a cave, the calcareous deposit descends from the roof, and unites columnlike with the deposits on the floor.

The matter of the stalactitic and stalagmitic formations is purest white, beautifully veined, and amazingly heavy. It is both beautiful and freakish in its formations.



Close resemblance in shape to many homely objects in the upper world is noticeable in all the caves.

“ Wild shapes for many a strange comparison.”

There are, too, stalactites which hang in graceful folds like a piece of fringed and embroidered tapestry of extraordinary delicacy and beauty.

The exquisite natural grotto work in the caves would, in countries more rich in art, set all the great carvers of marble busy in imitation.

In places where stalactitic pillars have joined stalagmitic shelves and formed a row of slender pillars, the pillars if struck emit musical notes of perfect purity and sweetness. With a little practice a person blessed with a good musical ear could produce on them scales and tunes.

There are a very large number of naturally-formed apartments in the Chillagoe Caves, each of which has been named in accordance with its dimensions or most striking formations. The banquet hall, the bridal chamber, the concert room, the jeweller's shop, explain themselves.

So far, because of their distance from cities, only the crudest attempts have been made to make these many and extensive cave apartments easily accessible. Neither has anything been done towards providing them with illumination. If lit up by clear and coloured lights, as are most caves that are recognised as show places, their beauty would be unrivalled. No producer of pantomimic sparkle and splendour has ever contrived any scene so brilliant and fantastic as almost any of the numerous chambers of the Chillagoe and Mungana caves reveal themselves under the influence of illuminant.

There have been banquets eaten and classic plays per-



formed in the Chillagoe Caves, and never did ancient Greece, with all its architectural and artistic glory provide a more splendid and stately scene of entertainment.

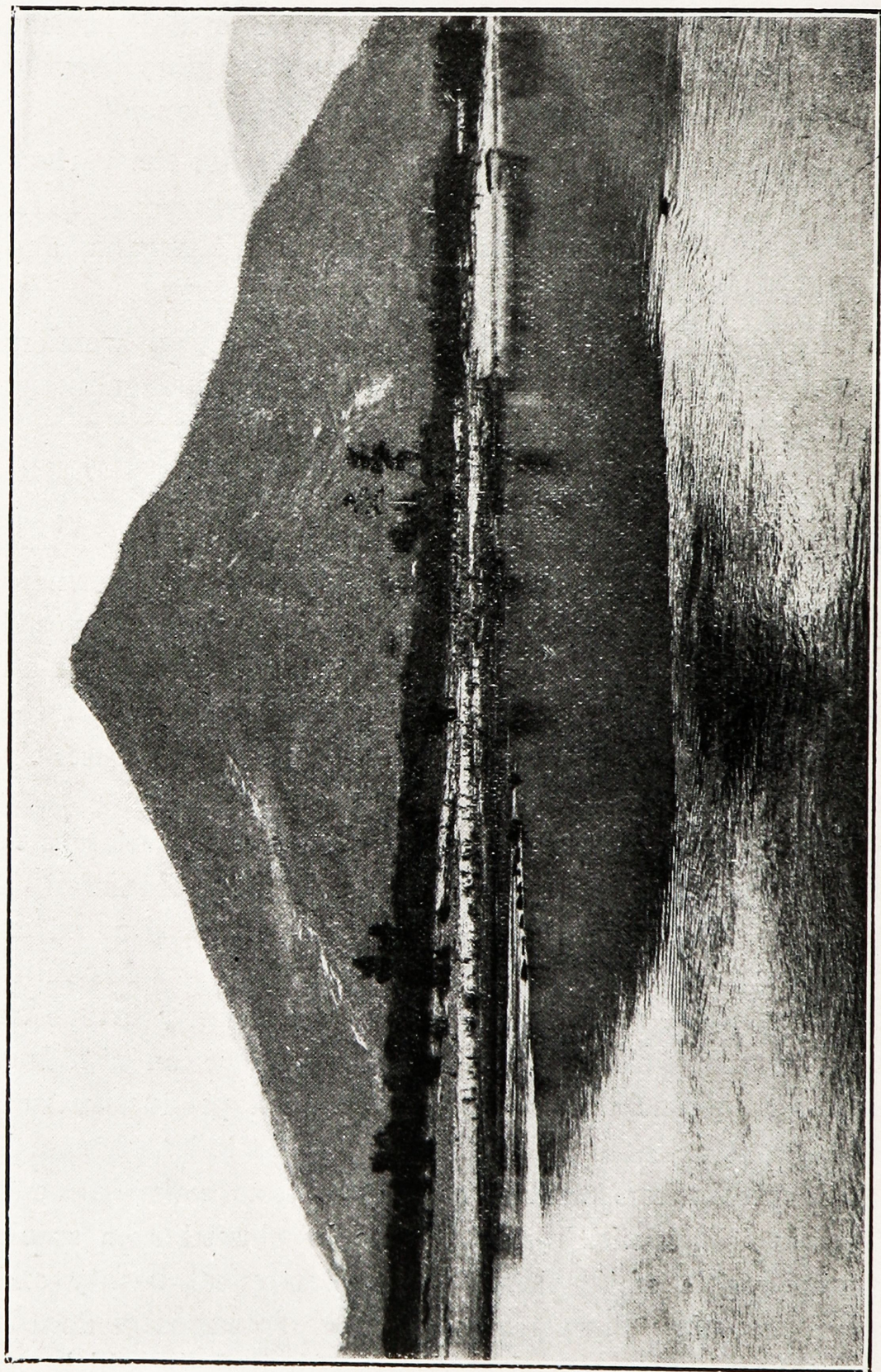
A whole week may be spent in exploring the various caves and studying the area's unique geological features. Guides can be procured in Chillagoe and Mungana, and arrangements made for the conveyance of parties.

Lovers of beauty and students of natural wonders cannot afford to miss these ancient, grand, and enduring monuments of Nature's might and will.

### **The Mulgrave Line.**

That portion of the Cairns Railway system known as the Mulgrave Line will form the last section of the proposed coastal railway from Rockhampton to Cairns. Almost all the way it passes through rich sugar-cane lands on the banks of alluvial streams or in valleys lying picturesquely at the base of mountains. At the time that these facts were written its terminus was at Moolaba, but work was in progress with a view to connecting it with Innisfail, a great sugar-growing and sugar-milling centre, situated on the other side of the Johnstone River, and only a few miles from the coast. The necessity to build a costly bridge *en route* retarded the scheme long after connection was due. Because the line passes through so much productive soil, inhabitants of the district have acquired a habit of regarding it merely as a business railway, but, actually, it passes through scenes which entitle it to be classed as a scenic route capable of displaying natural tropical beauty and other charming characteristics. Only occasionally does it run through spaces, and those very limited, in which the





PYRAMID MOUNTAIN, MULGRAVE RIVER.



less rich character of the soil is indicated by the presence of the sea-green, sword-shaped leaves and paper-bark of the pandanus palm.

The way plunges into rich scrub lands almost immediately after Cairns is left. Well-built homesteads stand amidst a blaze of colour lent by the foliage and flowers of imported species.

On open lands cows stand partially concealed by deep grass.

Palms of much beauty, including the ancient but reputedly mischievous zamia, are seen in their natural woods.

Where there are pools each of them is a water lily garden.

Hedge scrubs beautifully disguise the crudity of slab fences.

The valleys are park-like.

The beautiful plumes of the cocoanut palm wave almost ubiquitously beside farmhouses.

The mango trees are densely and grandily foliaged.

On the mountains is the gleam of many a narrow but deep and lively waterfall.

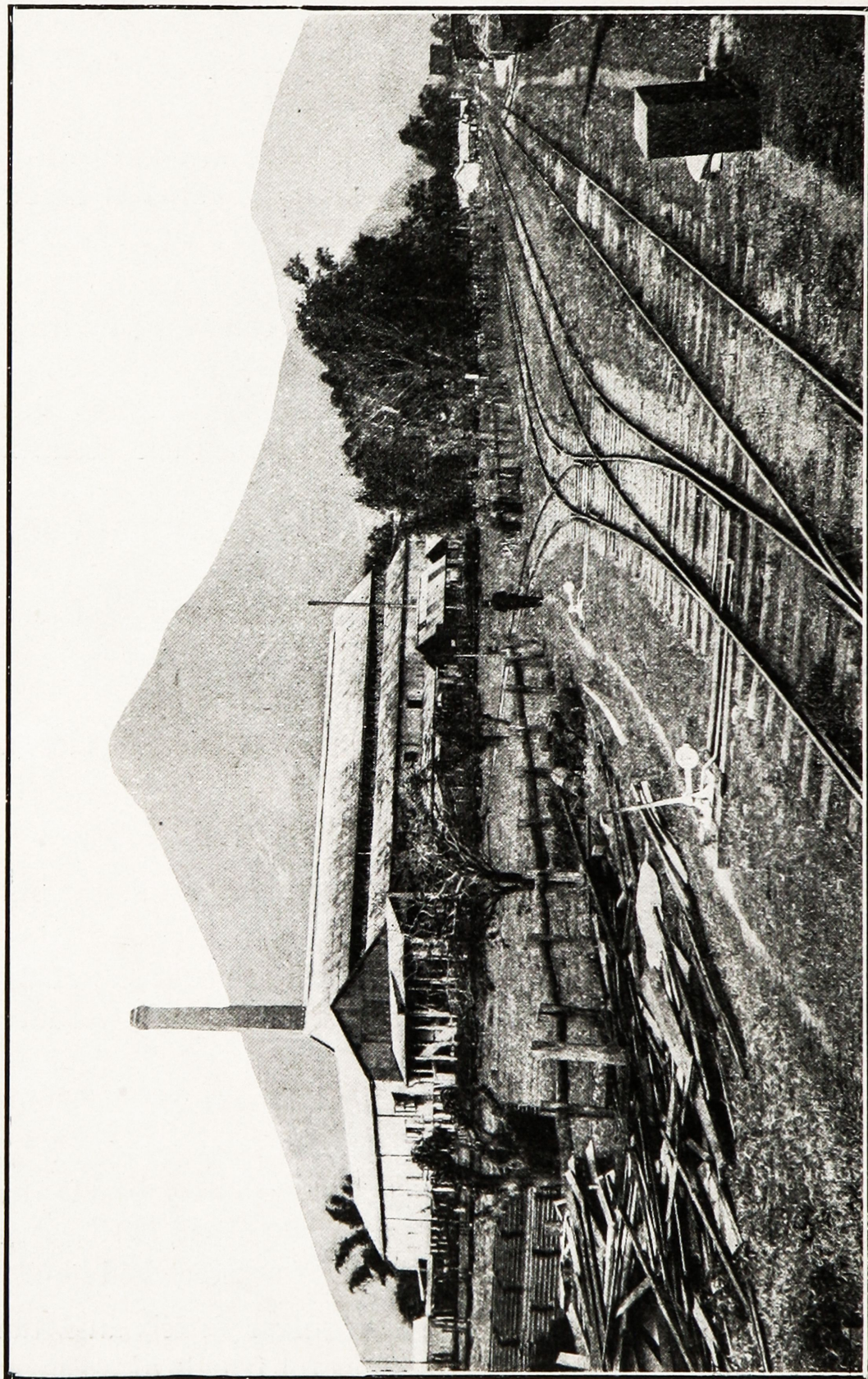
As well as the larger streams which are bridged, many little streams thread their silvery way through verdant lands.

The red soil of the roads makes a brilliant but harmonious contrast.

Further on, where the line lies immediately beside the scrub, ferns, large and small, fragile and robust, herbaceous and tree-like, are almost within reach of outstretched hands.

From the broad leaves of the ginger family and the tangled thickets of palms to the graceful fronds of creepers





MULGRAVE MILL AND PYRAMID MOUNT.



which embrace the tree trunks there is refreshing variety. There are far more blossoming species in the open forest places, but the variety of colouring in scrub foliage satisfies all the demands of the eye.

Field after field of sugar-cane, villages nestling in glens and beside rivers, the tall chimney-stacks of sugar-mills—infrequent but emphatic—and as a finish to the constant series of scenic settings a stately range of coastal mountains and its outliers. On those mountains sometimes half a dozen distinct showers may be seen heavily falling. The higher points of the range are nearly always cloud-draped, and during the rainy season there seems there to be a wedding of earth and sky.

### **The Route Particularised.**

Gordonvale is the first town of important size reached outward from Cairns on this line. It is very prettily situated, and its rural surroundings seem to beckon travellers to—

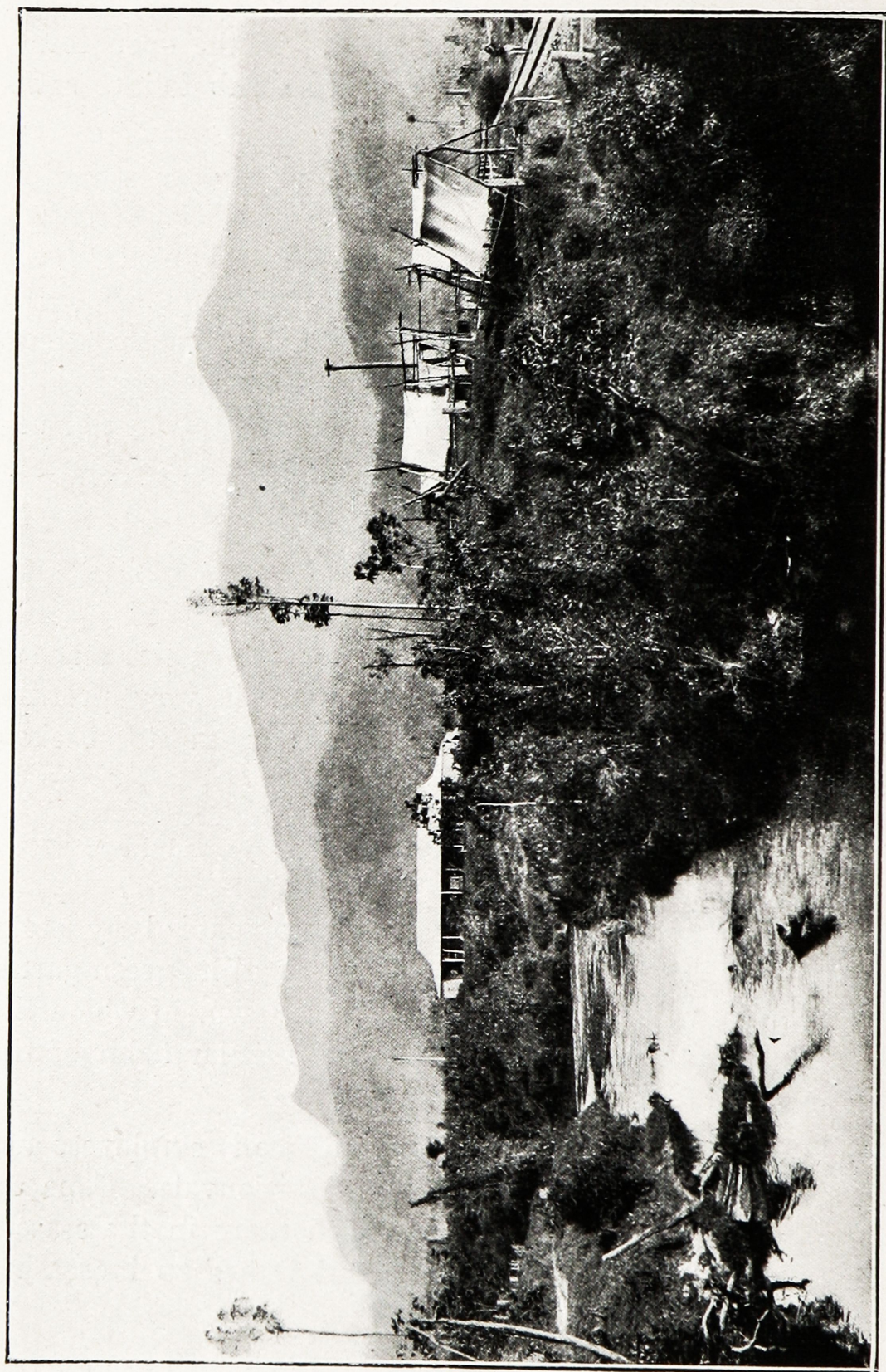
“ Where the trailing boughs of the tea-tree droop;  
Where the vines hang festooned in curve and loop;  
Where lilies float and the tall reeds stoop.”

But those travellers who are accompanied by stout cases labelled “ samples ” know that for all its green garniture Gordonvale is a bristling business town, in which the booking of orders is as certain as the regular habit of the first streak of dawn.

The Mulgrave Sugar Mill, with its many employees and its proud record of crushings, is at Gordonvale. Cane up to a weight of 80,000 tons is crushed there in the season. The mill is a company concern, and it has an increasing number of suppliers.

Its convenient distance from Cairns brings Gordonvale





JOSEPHINE CREEK AND BELLENDEN WEIR.



many visitors from the coast, and farmers from round about make it a weekly marketing place. Close at hand the scrub and mountains recede, and there is a broad expanse of cane lands on either side of the line. Beyond the cane also on each side are mountains with waterfall tracks. For the greater part these elevations are wooded, but a bold cliff shows here and there. The observation balconies of the train are sure of patronage as this rich area is traversed. The sugarcane takes from nine to twelve months to mature, and it usually can be seen at every stage of growth.

Other sugar-towns and villages are passed, and the ground directly traversed by the railway grows more uneven and more threaded by small, swiftly-running streams before Meerawa and Mount Sophia are reached.

The most outstanding features of Mount Sophia are tree orchids and cone-shaped hills.

At Fishery Creek—a name which is a chapter in itself—the water is crystal clear. Near the creek's banks are hedges which all the year round are covered by blue-blossomed convolvulus.

If there are on the train well-informed residents of the locality, they may easily be persuaded to tell of botanical features which are not assertive on the edges of the scrub that again has become a companion of the way. They may tell of wild nuts and edible berries, the quandong, with its pleasant sourness and its naturally carved stone; of the peculiarity which makes the fruit of the wild banana sweetly seedy and nothing more; of the pleasant cordial that can be made from wild raspberries, and their acceptability in their raw state in conjunction with sugar and cream.

As Bellenden Ker and Bartle Frere are neared in their



majestic calm, there comes, too, perhaps, full realisation of the meaning of that biblical poet who declared that—

“The mountains shall bring peace to the people.”

Unseen on the other side of those grand hills the surf lazily laps or briskly assaults white beaches, but on the Mulgrave line side of the range an air of intense quiet is the usually prevailing feature. They are not of that class of mountain sharply turreted and bristly peaked which typify some of Australia's far-stretching mountain ranges. Dark woods and shrubs clothe them up to their lofty summits, and this pleasant disguise gives them a more gently appealing class of beauty; this, too, in spite of Bellenden Ker's cloudy exaltation to a height of 5,500 feet.

Bellenden Ker has three prominent peaks, each of which offers an invitation, not too difficult of acceptance, to ambitious climbers. Whatever the errand which takes travellers along this route, joy in the highest mountains of North Queensland is the result.

### **Babinda.**

Babinda, a little town, whose business activities may be said to have a foundation in the cultivation and milling of sugarcane, lies in a pleasant valley in close proximity to the giants of the Range. Within its boundaries is the Central or State Sugar Mill, which has a constantly increasing record in regard to the crushing of sugar. It is generally wise to avoid quoting statistics in relation to the productiveness of areas to which newly-cultivated lands are added yearly, but the statement that in the 1917 season 150,600 tons of cane were crushed at the Babinda Mill, and that 120 men were employed there will give some idea of the extensive sugar-growing operations of a new district in which there is still rich scrub land awaiting cultivation.



Most of the growers who supply the Babinda Mill have small, easily handled acreages. Some farms are worked on the co-operative system, both as regards ownership and labour. This is particularly so in the Italian groups, which are markedly contented and prosperous in a field of primary industry in which prosperity is the general rule.

The services of the Agricultural Bank, a State institution, have been availed of by farmers who were short of capital, with satisfactory results.

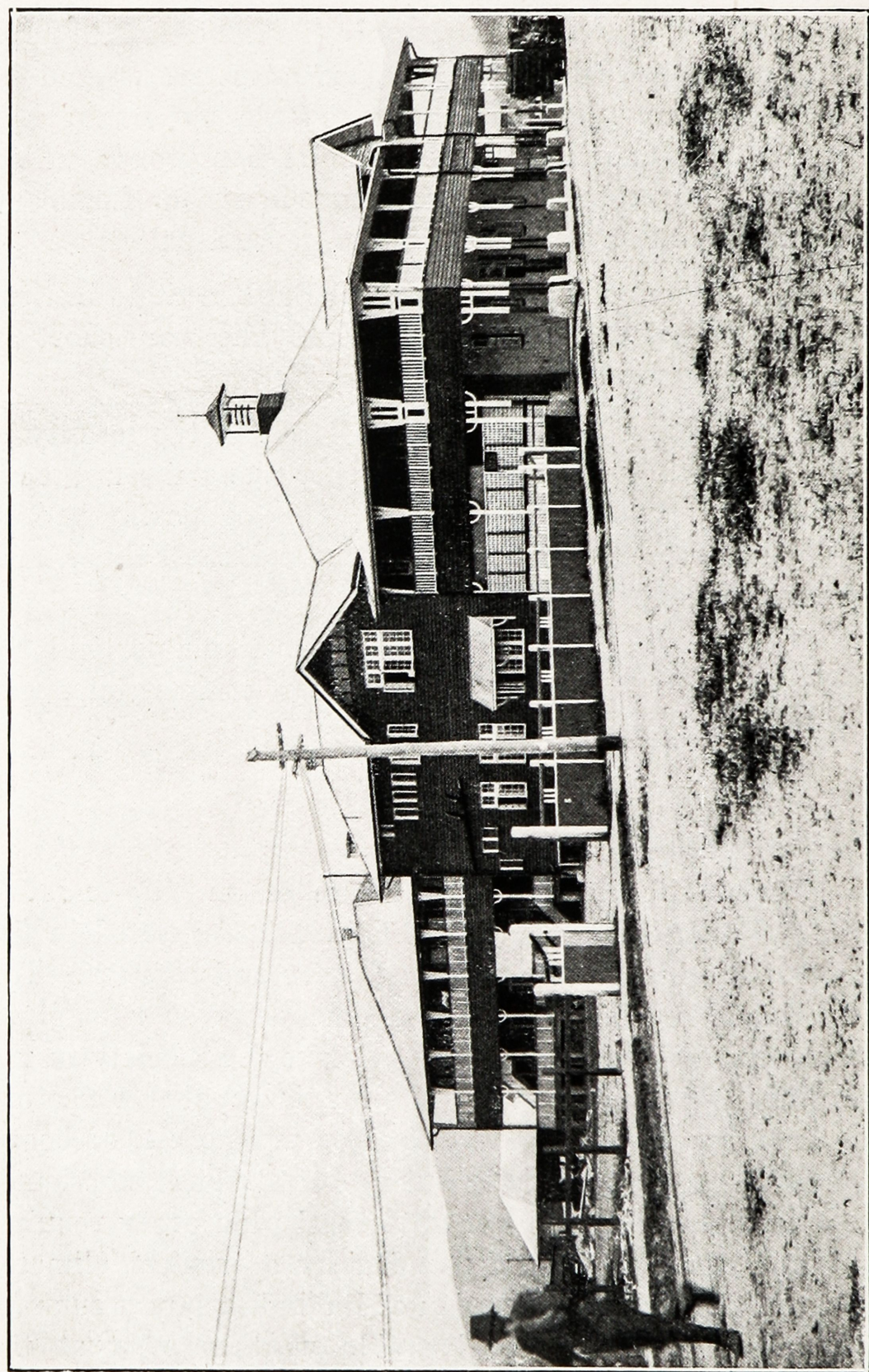
The average yield of the cane lands in the locality is from 70 to 80 tons per acre. Further along the line near Meolaba the yield is greater still. This particular belt of sugar land extends from Babinda to the Russell River, and beyond that to Innisfail.

At the Babinda Mill there is in operation a particularly expert system of deciding the average commercial sugar contents of the cane.

### **The State Hotel.**

The establishment by the State of an "up-to-date" first and second class hotel at Babinda has resulted in the joint establishment of much good order and comfort. The hotel is under the control of a manager who runs it in accordance with rules designed to make for sobriety in the township and the utmost comfort for those patrons who use the hotel for the purposes, casual or permanent, of board and lodging. Substantially but gracefully built, the handsome structure has in its architectural plan every requirement of space and air demanded by a tropical climate; this, too, although the situation of Babinda tempers summer atmosphere, and ensures bearable weather even at the hottest period of the summer. Very wide verandahs and





STATE HOTEL, BABINDA.



equally wide balconies ceiled with timber surround the building, and are furnished plentifully with canvas chairs. There are several spacious lounges tastefully furnished, and supplied with the necessaries for rest and recreation. A large lounge downstairs is built partly on the open-air principle, and is furnished with a temperance bar.

Drawing and smoke-rooms, pianos, one of which is fitted with a piano-player, billiard room, and the nucleus of a library offer entertainment and sociality.

Both dining-rooms are large and airy, and in the second-class dining-room, as in the first, the appointments and service are refined in character.

All balconies and verandas on the weather side are enclosed in glass, very artistically contained in a multitude of small squares.

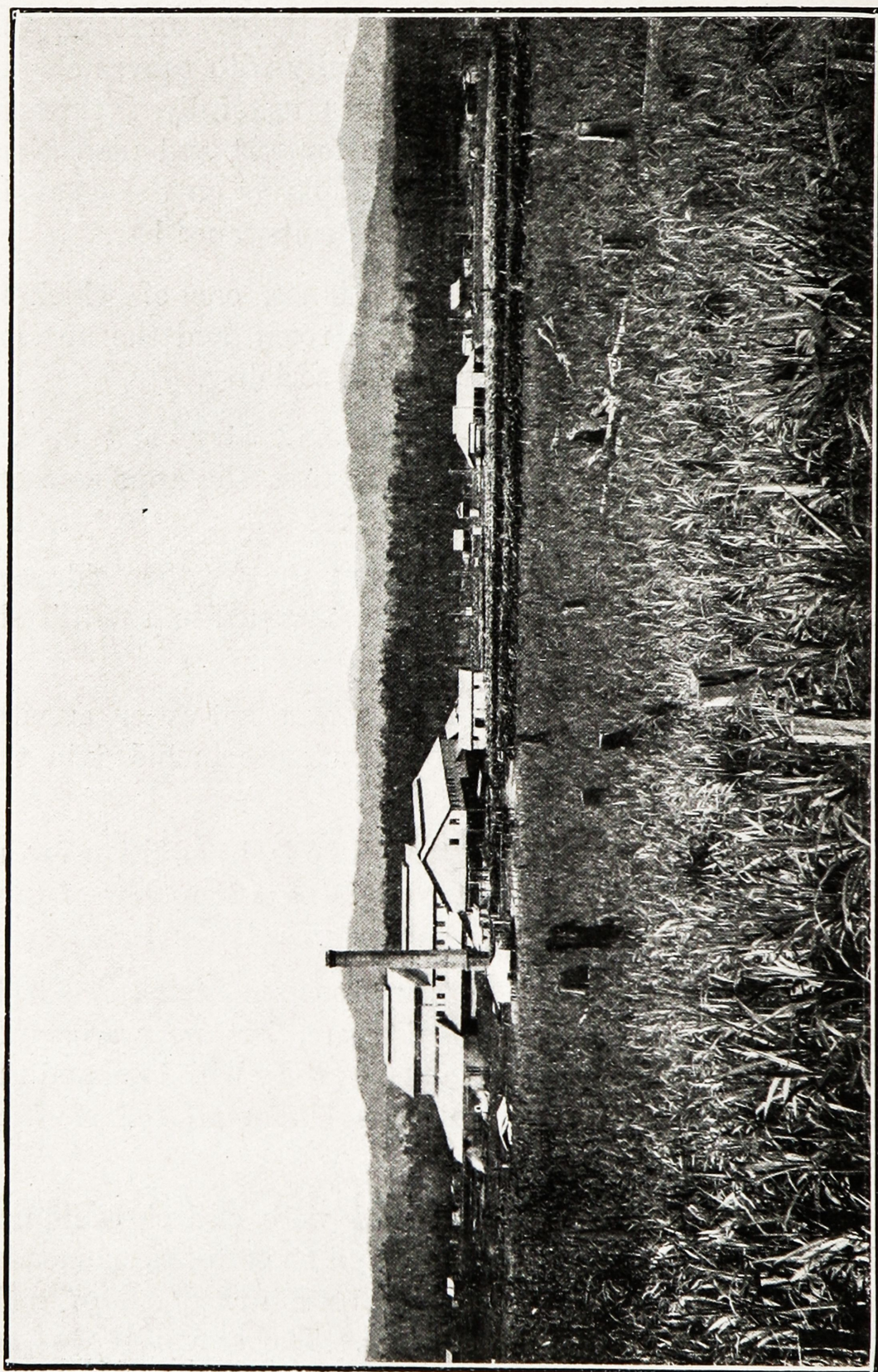
Its own electric-lighting plant, a hot-water service, aerated water plant, and septic tank are included in the establishment's system of service.

In the second-class quarters there is, in addition to the bathrooms, a large lavatory, containing a long row of taps and basins for ablutionary purposes.

Each of the second-class bedrooms contains two beds and two duchess chests of drawers, but no washstand. Each man carries his towel to the lavatory with him, and the system, as well as entailing less labour to the staff, is approved by the boarders.

The furnishings of the hotel were entirely supplied by two establishments in Cairns, and no better recommendation for the quality of the furniture turned out of their factories could be seen anywhere. The beautiful Queensland timbers only were used, and an inspection of bedroom





BABINDA SUGAR MILL.



and other furniture at the State hotel is a fine advertisement of the State's timber values.

A very large number of fine photographic views of Queensland scenery framed in Queensland woods decorate the walls.

The quarters of the domestic staff are built and furnished on the same comfortable plan, and the female staff have a comfortable private sitting-room.

The appointments of the very large kitchen are designed with a view to obtaining the best results in association with saving of labour.

As many mill employees board in the second-class quarters, the breakfast and dining hours of that portion of the establishment have been arranged to suit their convenience.

A pretty landscape garden in miniature occupies the ground space between the kitchen quarters and the main building.

The cuisine is all that could be desired, and a favourite feature of the house is that bedrooms can be so much opened up that those who rest in them enjoy the refreshment of open-air sleeping.

The superior advantages offered by the hotel have made it extremely popular with visitors who have a taste for the comforts of life in association with peace, order, and intelligent efforts towards social reform.

### **Walks and Excursions.**

Its nearness to the mountain range provides Babinda with many pleasant walks. One of the prettiest leads in about fifteen minutes to the mountain stream and waterfall from which the town's delightfully pure water supply is



obtained. There in a pleasant gorge is "Psyche's Pool" beside a little weir. Round about it are giant fern trees, handsome ginger plants, and a score of other beautifully foliated species. The water is so clear and cool that all who see it are impelled to stop and drink. It is the same water that runs from the taps at the State hotel, and which is put to all the liquid requirements of the sugar mill. There are hundreds of similar mountain-side streams in this range which could similarly serve as town water supplies.

On Bartle Frere, only a short distance from Babinda, there are important and beautiful waterfalls which can be reached by picnic parties.

The roads round about are good for riding or driving, and the industry and production of the farms may be studied at close quarters.

Visitors who are sufficiently active to climb Bartle Frere or the nearer peak of Bellenden-Ker will see a view on either side so magnificent as to be unparalleled in tropical scenery anywhere. Only hardy climbers, prepared to camp out if necessary, should try to gain such heights, but there are many less elevated hills the ascent of which will provide beautiful outlooks and exercise not too strenuous.

Though its summer nights are pleasantly cool, the temperature of Babinda in winter has that pleasant degree of warmth which visitors from the South go far to find in association with interesting surroundings.

### **The Birds of the Hills.**

Students of bird life and lovers of birds find the gorges, such as that which contains "Psyche's Pool," the





VIEW ON RUSSELL RIVER.



best places in which to see and hear them.

“ Down some creek’s meandering way,  
Where the graceful wattle showers  
O’er the stream the yellow flowers,  
And the fair clematis twines  
Round the whispering casuarines.”

Such are the meeting-places of the birds, and there if a human intruder stills his tread at early morn he will hear the incomparable song of the fluting magpie, the low booming notes of pigeons, the lorikeets’ sharp fantastic call, the deep deceptive notes of feathered ventriloquists, the pretty chirp of hundreds of the least of the bird kingdom.

Sometimes shy, brown pheasants come out for a morning dip, while birds of alluring colouration flutter preliminarily in a sort of scout duty.

There are many beautifully plumaged families in these hills, and no less brilliant are the butterflies, which soon after sunrise flit round, seemingly in playful idleness, but really doing duty as fertilisers of wild bush flowers.

All the world over yellow and white supply the trimmings of Spring’s livery. In this region of evergreenness there are two floral springs in each year. The red blaze, too, of rare species assists to provide a happy and busy time for the butterflies and the honey-eating birds.

### **The End of the Line.**

A singularly deep and productive soil under dense sugar crops lies beside the further way—from Babinda to Moolaba. Beyond Moolaba lies the Russell River with its edges of rich alluvial soil. Further on, and yet to be linked up by rail, is the great sugar district of Innisfail, which is connected by tramway with Mourilyan on the coast.





ON DOUBLE ISLAND.



**Mourilyan.**

Mourilyan is the first important coastal town southward from Cairns on the route of the small steamers which hug the coast between the former port and Townsville. It has a famously beautiful harbour. "See Naples and die," once was the dictum of travellers who hoped to carry away with them to plane celestial a soul memory of the most beautiful and perfect thing on plane terrestrial. There have been enthusiasts who have applied to Mourilyan Harbour similar phrase with similar meaning.

The entrance to this coastal gem is narrow, and there is a rapid rush through it of outgoing and incoming tides, but once entered the extent of the harbour is so much larger than the entrance seemed to suggest, that it is always a source of astonishment to newcomers. Perfectly land-locked except for the narrow strait by way of which it is entered, and bordered by thickly-timbered hills, its waters reflecting celestial blue, the buildings of its settlement clinging to the hillside, its wharves looking almost apologetic for intrusion on scene so idyllic—of such degree of beauty is Mourilyan.

At dawn and sunset, too, those waters reflect with resplendent result the beauties, always intensely enjoyable to the eye, that accompany the dawning and ending of a tropical day—dawn passing through many lovely hues into a definite and emphatic blue; sunset tinting the hill-crests on the left with red and gold and the right with purple.

Soon after the arrival of the steamer in this incomparably pretty scene, a puffing little engine rattles down an almost completely hidden way, and receives goods and passengers.

The rails on which this miniature trains travels are only



two feet apart, but the journey to Innisfail is so interesting, that it is quite unusual to hear any complaints concerning oscillation.

*En route* Mourilyan Sugar Mill is passed, but the great objective of the little railway is Innisfail, formerly known as Geraldton—in the rainy season the wettest and all the year round one of the most fertile and productive districts of Australia.

Here, too, is beauty permanent and in abundance. Innisfail, in Ireland, is one of the world's famous beauty spots, and Queensland's Innisfail was not too much flattered by the reapplication of the name. Hills, valleys, and water scenery make it a worthy namesake. And in addition there is the constant grace of groves of palms.

The township stands on low hills overlooking the Johnstone River, which there is broad, beautiful, and often busy with sugarboats. The river was named after the first police inspector deputed to maintain law and order in the very early days of settlement.

Every species of tropical agriculture is successfully operated round about the Johnstone's lower reaches, but sugar is the staple crop, and a very large number of workers are casually or permanently employed in connection with sugar cultivation and the milling of the raw product.

### **Sugar-mills.**

The best known of the Innisfail District sugar-mills are those at Goondi and South Johnstone.

The Goondi Mill is distant from Innisfail about 3 miles by road and 8 miles by river. Its owners are the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Its position immediately by the riverside conveniently enables cane to be



delivered by the river "carriers" or barges at one end of the mill, and to be turned out bagged sugar at the other end ready for transport by other carriers down the river to a point at which it can be transferred to the coastal steamers.

Across the river from Goondi is Daraja, which is reached by rail over a bridge or by punt.

The South Johnstone Sugar Mill belongs to the Government. It is one of the best appointed mills in the State. Special attention has been given to the board and lodging of the mill employees, who here are well provided with domestic comfort.

The output of sugar for the Innisfail district had reached nearly 40,000 tons in 1917, and there is still good agricultural land awaiting development.

### **Other Resources.**

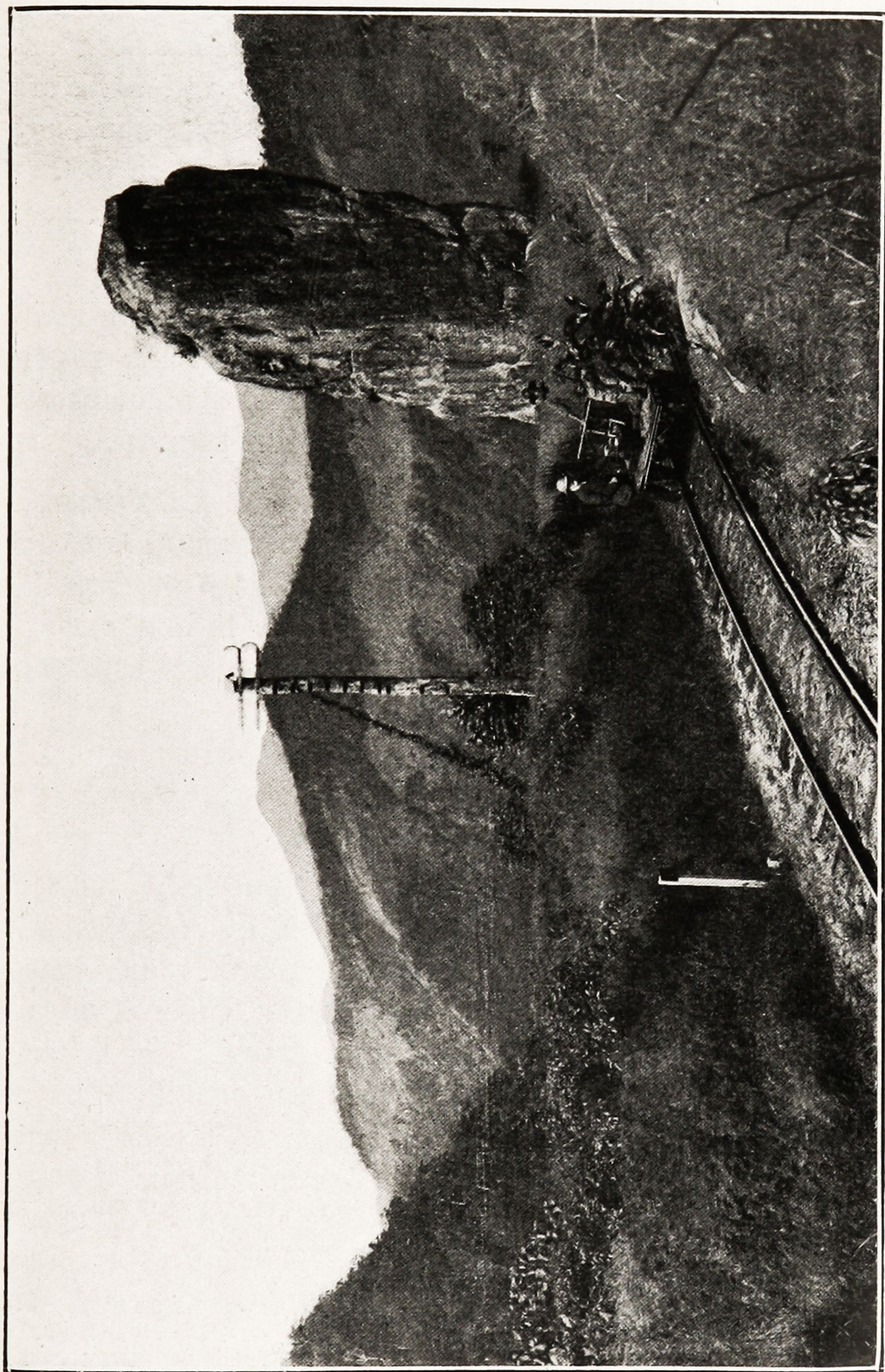
Much of the best fruit sent to the South from North Queensland is grown in the Innisfail district. Some fine banana plantations lie close beside the Mourilyan tramway.

Oranges, lemons, tomatoes, grow to perfection almost without care.

South of the Johnstone is Maria Creek, where the timber wealth makes a busy industry. There are two large sawmills in Innisfail, at which the valuable timbers of the scrub are prepared for building and other trades. The beautifully grained silky oak, which is unsurpassed as a material for the development of the cabinet-maker's masterpieces, grows very plentifully in the locality.

Wherever the land is cleared cattle thrive on the natural grasses, and there are milk and cream in abundance, but there is no regular dairying industry.





ROBE'S MONUMENT, CAIRNS RAILWAY.



### **Some Natural Features.**

So much has been told of waterfalls in this booklet that it is almost with diffidence that the very pretty waterfalls of Innisfail district are mentioned. The Cowley Falls and Fisher Falls are each fine in their way, which, as is the tendency of fine waterfalls, is different from any other waterfalls' way.

The beautiful flora of the locality includes some rare lily varieties. There are good riding and driving roads to the mills and to many of the plantations, and almost invariably these afford glimpses of graceful scenery.

Crocodiles are among the less pleasing natural features, but they now are rarely seen, although experienced hunters contrive to catch them, and to sell them at a fixed price per foot. Their hides make leather which is handsomely marked and almost indestructible by the process of constant wear.

### **Final Words.**

Never was material for official publicity matter gathered in districts more richly endowed by Nature than those here particularised and described, and which have their important seaport centre at Cairns. Their development so far has been that which was most easily and superficially accomplishable, and the statement sometimes made—"their resources have only been scratched"—has actual truth to recommend it to serious consideration. Something is known and is constantly demonstrated of what may be done with the scrub soil, but to the forest lands science has not been applied at all, and to the mineral areas it has been applied but superficially. In years to come—the sooner the better for Queensland and Australia





BARRON RIVER.



generally—it will surely happen that great manufacturing industries in which natural and cultivated products are utilised will arise in some of the districts here traversed in print. The harnessing of waterfalls for the purpose of providing electric power will make the beginning of a new era of development with an incidental inrush of population.

When it is better realised that there are in North Queensland elevated undulating tablelands which possess a temperate climate, super-rich soil, and a certain rainfall, family men who have conceived a quite unreasonable dread of the tropics will not hesitate to seek fair fortune there.

When it is known that it possesses lofty mountain sites perfectly suited for sanatoria, it will be understood that residents can very economically effect recuperative change of air from the level coastal lands.

Those, too, who desire that their life and labours shall not divorce them from beautiful landscapes there will find feasts for the eye round about their daily way, and soon will grant that inclination prompted wisely when it led them through island-studded straits and channels, surpassingly beautiful to novitiate eyes, to North Queensland, where there were room and ample activity amply repaid for all.

The completion of the coast railway will bring the north much nearer. When that happy consummation is reached, the land journey, conveniently broken to prevent weariness, will have its own beauty show to reveal, and those to whom the sea brings uneasiness will suffer no timid qualms in regard to undertaking the journey at any time of the year.



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